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MEMOIR

OF THE

REV. THOMAS SCOTT,

RECTOR OF ASTON SANDFORD, BUCKS;

ABRIDGED

FROM HIS LIFE COMPILED BY HIS SON.

1863 E 76

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PREFACE.

It is the character of the good man that he is more ambitious to please God than man. And if he lives so as to obtain the divine approbation, he leaves behind him a character worthy the imitation of those who would attain the same object. It is desirable that characters worthy of imitation be placed in such a light that all possible benefit may be derived from them. To youth especially, example is more alluring than precept is impressive. And to youth the following memoir is presented in the hope that while they endeavour to avoid the follies of his younger years, they will imitate the virtues of him who is the subject of this memoir: that while they see his conquest over his turbulent passions, it may encourage them in self-command.

Though the subject of this memoir was "a man of no pretensions," born in humble life, he became by his own efforts one of the most distinguished Theologians of his day, and was perhaps, more useful than any of his cotemporaries. And what can prevent many of our American youth from arriving at equal eminence? This is peculiarly an age of exertion, and of facilities for improvement, and whoever will, may avail themselves of these facilities. Very few would be obliged to surmount such obstacles as obstructed the path of Mr. Scott.

There is also an extensive field for usefulness. This field is the world, and it affords ample space for all the talents and efforts in christendom. The work is a glorious work, engaging not only the energies of angels, but of the God of Angels. The harvest to be reaped is a harvest of immortal souls; one

of whom is of more value than all terrestrial things beside. A being capable of sustaining *an eternal weight of glory*, or of enduring throughout interminable ages the fiercest wrath of an offended God. To redeem him from everlasting misery, and raise him to the privileges of the blessed in heaven, the Son of the Highest condescended for a season to be disrobed of the Godhead, and not only to dwell with men on the earth, but to purchase their redemption with his blood.

May 7, 1830.

MEMOIR

OF THE

REV. THOMAS SCOTT.

CHAPTER I.

His birth and parentage—Residence at Bennington—Studies at Scorton—Bound to an apothecary at Alford—Ill conduct and dismission—Temporary reformation—Employment on his father's farm.

The Rev. Thomas Scott was born at Braytoft in the county of Lincoln in England, Feb. 16, 1747. His father, Mr. John Scott, was a grazier or farmer; and though possessing uncommon energy of mind, and vigour of intellect, was never affluent; yet in the latter part of his life he attained to comfortable circumstances. His mother was well calculated to educate and govern her large family of thirteen children; and it was from her he received the first rudiments of his education. He studied a short time at a school two miles from his father's house, which he attended as a day scholar. Mr. Scott owned a farm at Bennington on which his sister, one of his eldest sons, and a daughter, resided. When Thomas was eight years of age, he was sent there for the purpose of attending a school kept by a clergyman, and remained two years. At that time he was taught Writing,

Arithmetic, and Latin. He also, like most other children, made proficiency in vicious habits, and once came very near drowning, in consequence of running into danger, in defiance of warning.

Mr. Scott's eldest son had been educated as a Physician, but died at the age of twenty-five, of a malignant fever caught on board a Man-of-war. This induced him to wish to educate another son for that profession. Thomas being considered at the proper age to commence preparatory studies, and capable of readily learning Latin was selected for that purpose. He was accordingly sent to Scorton, one hundred and forty miles from home, and remained there five years, without seeing any relative or acquaintance. Owing to his father's limited resources, his clothing was ordinary, yet he was tenderly taken care of, both in sickness and health by the kind lady with whom he boarded. The effect, however, of so long an absence from parents and other friends, together with the contagion of bad example and vicious habits, was very unfavourable to his moral and social character. It is natural for youth to dislike restraint however salutary it may be, but could they be made sensible of its present benefit, and happy fruits in subsequent life, they would regard it as one of their greatest blessings.

When Thomas arrived at Scorton he was questioned concerning the Latin books he had read, and as he mentioned several of which he had only a superficial knowledge, the teacher

was induced to overrate his proficiency and place him in a class much above his attainments. This, instead of discouraging him, stimulated him to exertion, and by close application he soon overtook his classmates. Having accomplished this, and being able to keep up with his class without great exertions, and also to impose on his Preceptor, by an appearance of being more studious than he was, he became remiss in his studies. Like other boys he spent much of his time in play, and being in want of spending money, he used for a small compensation to help his fellow students in their exercises. By this means he obtained small sums of money, which he foolishly spent in trifles, or lost in gaming. He made however, considerable progress in his studies and could translate Latin into English, and English into Latin, more readily than any other boy in school. But one thing was very remarkable, he could not compose themes. When attempting any thing of the kind, he really seemed to have *no ideas*, either then or for some years afterwards, and was even greatly at a loss to write a common letter. He looked upon nothing with so much surprise as large books, being utterly at a loss to conceive how they could be produced. This and other facts have suggested the idea, that to find composition a difficult task in a young person, is rather a promising symptom than the contrary. Precocity in writing is very often no other than the art of writing without ideas, while they who

cannot write till they have thought, are more likely, eventually, to store their minds with valuable matter.

During his five years residence at Scorton, Thomas passed through the various vicissitudes of sickness and health, danger and escapes, common to most youth, accumulated, perhaps, by his violent temper and eager spirit. Once he narrowly escaped death by a blow on his head, (the mark of which he carried to his grave) from a school-fellow, of as violent passions as himself, to whom he had offered a slight offence. He had no faithful friend, or watchful parent nigh him to restrain his feet from the devious paths of sin; and God was not in all his thoughts; of course his conduct was as immoral as want of money, pride, fear of temporal consequences, and a natural bashfulness would admit it to be; except that by the force of education he was kept from habitual profanity, and never indulged in it, unless in violent temper. His crimes generally escaped detection, but once he was publicly disgraced for robbing an orchard. It may with truth be said of him at that time, *there was no fear of God before his eyes.*

Thomas returned from Scorton in June 1762, and spent some weeks in visiting relatives and acquaintance; during which time it was a matter of deliberation whether he should return to Scorton for another year. This he anxiously desired with the hope that he might enter the University for which he thought he should be

the superior force of temptation, that he secretly concluded reformation in his case was impracticable. He was experimentally convinced that he was morally unable to stem the torrent of his own impetous inclinations, when incited by suitable and powerful temptations, and being ignorant that God had engaged to do it for the returning supplicating penitent, he stifled conviction, and put off repentance to a more convenient season.

But leading him to consideration, was not the only good which an infinitely wise Providence brought out of his unhappy apprenticeship. Thomas was dismissed by his master before the premium agreed upon had been paid. His father resolutely refused to pay the remainder, and his master as resolutely refused to give up the indentures, until it was paid; and no compromise was attempted. The consequence was that being nominally this person's apprentice, he could not be bound to another. Thus he was prevented from pursuing medical studies, and a way prepared for him to become eminently useful in the church of Christ. Though we would justify the ways of God in his dealings with his servants, we cannot so easily justify the parent or the master in the case before us. The one had educated his son far from the reach of parental observation or restraint; the other had set him an ungodly example. Yet his apparent interests in life were sacrificed, or unwarrantably disregarded amid the contentions

of these high spirited men; and the degradations and hardships to which, as it will be seen, he was subjected through many succeeding years, appear to have been dictated rather by the mortified pride of his family, than by any just principle. Still his case was infinitely preferable to that of youth who are allowed to continue in sin, unnoticed and unpunished, until they open their eyes in never ending misery beyond the grave.

On his return to his father, Thomas was employed in the most laborious and uncleanly parts of the work belonging to a grazier. He commenced this business about the beginning of winter, and as much of his father's farm consisted of low land which was often flooded, he was introduced to scenes of hardship, and exposed to many dangers from wet and cold, for which his previous habits had not prepared him; consequently he had frequent and severe attacks of sickness, so that his life was more than once thought to be in imminent danger. Still a kind of indignant, proud self-revenge kept him from complaining of hardship; though of reproach, or of reproof, he was impatient even to irascibility. At the period of which we are now speaking, he had many serious thoughts of God and eternity, and every illness produced a sort of paroxysm of religion, in which, after having prayed for pardon, in an earnest but ignorant manner, he felt assured of heaven; though as soon as he recovered, all his religion vanished like the

morning cloud. How many sick persons fall into the same dangerous errour. Unaware of the strictness of the divine law, or of the nature of repentance and faith, they imagine that one or two cries for mercy will save them: they die contented, and awake in torments. Their supposed happy deaths are reported abroad; others are thereby induced to delay repentance until a sick bed, which perhaps renders them insensible of their danger, and they also perish.

CHAPTER II.

Hardships from his sixteenth to his twenty-ninth year—Attempts to obtain orders—His ordination—Accepts two curacies—His own reflections—An incident.

After a few unsuccessful attempts to procure a place for Thomas to prosecute his studies, Mr. Scott placed him at work upon his farm, as has been already mentioned, where for more than nine years he was almost as much a drudge, and as little known beyond his immediate neighbourhood, as any servant in his father's business. He was generally employed in tending cattle and sheep. In this service, by encountering all sorts of weather, he acquired habits of hardihood and industry which were useful to him in subsequent life. But his situation led him

necessarily to associate with low and unprincipled persons. They flattered his vanity, incited his pride and instigated him to rebellion; while he embittered the mind of his father by accompanying them in their dishonourable diversions. During this period he retained his fondness for literary pursuits, and often beguiled the tediousness of his laborious solitude by thoughts of future literary distinction. Hence he spent much of his leisure in reading such books as he could procure, and probably would have made considerable proficiency had he met with proper encouragement. But in addition to the want of suitable books, he was continually subjected to the frowns and reproaches of his father, which induced him often to quit his books for low and abandoned company. The discontent that corroded his mind during several of these years, was extreme, and increased his natural harshness, thus rendering him a great temptation and trial to his father, and others about him, to whom he generally behaved very disrespectfully. After some time, however, he became more reconciled to his lot, and concluded that though for his misconduct at Alford he was treated more harshly than others of the family, yet he should eventually be provided for as a grazier; and in consequence of this reflection, waking dreams of other pursuits, became less vivid in his mind. He had only one surviving brother, who was well situated on a farm; his father was far advanced in life, and Thomas expected he

should succeed to his farm. At length he discovered that the farm was privately conveyed by will to his brother, and he was to be an under-tenant to him for a piece of land of small value. On this discovery, he determined to make some effort, however desperate, to extricate himself, and only waited for a suitable opportunity; in the mean time applying himself closely to his studies. In April, 1772, he avowed his intention in a very harsh manner. After a long wet day of incessant fatigue, deeming himself (and perhaps justly) causelessly and severely blamed, he gave full vent to his indignant passions, and throwing aside his frock, declared his purpose, never more to resume it. He spent the night at his brother's at a little distance. In the morning recollecting a piece of work, for which no other person was competent, he returned, and having accomplished it, sat out immediately for Boston, where a clergyman resided with whom he had some acquaintance. To him he opened his mind, yet not without hesitation and trepidation; and nothing could well exceed the astonishment of that gentleman, when he heard his purpose of attempting to become a clergyman. He immediately asked, "Do you know any thing of Latin or Greek?" He stated to him the education he had received, and was requested to read in the Greek Testament. This he did without difficulty, rendering what he had read into Latin and English. The clergyman expressed his surprise, but observed,

"Our visitation will be next week; the Arch-Deacon, Dr. Gordon, will be here, I will mention you to him, and induce him, if I can, to send for you." This being settled, he returned to his father for the intervening days, knowing how much, at that season, he needed his help, in labours which he could no longer perform himself, and was not accustomed to entrust to servants. At the appointed time he returned to Boston and readily found access to the Arch-Deacon, who was also examining chaplain to the Bishop of Lincoln. After examination the Arch-Deacon assured him that he would state his case to the Bishop, and presumed he would ordain him. Thus encouraged, he expended all the little money he could raise for books, and applied diligently to study, particularly to improve his knowledge of Greek and acquire the ability of composing in Latin. He had acquired the talent of composing in English chiefly by corresponding with his sister on sentimental and other subjects. Mr. Scott's wish to become a preacher did not arise from any desire to do good, consequently his religious state was not at all improved; but a regard to decorum induced him to be more correct in his outward conduct than formerly, and he constantly attended public worship and the Lord's Table.

Other circumstances concurred with his eagerness of spirit, to render it desirable that his affairs should have an early crisis. Those persons whom he was able to consult were of

opinion that he would be as likely to obtain ordination the ensuing Trinity Sunday, (June 14, 1772,) as at any future time. This would not be seven weeks from the time he first left his father. He therefore procured a title to a small curacy, being obliged to walk above fifty miles for the purpose; got his testimonials signed, and other things in regular order. As the ordination would be held in London, he forwarded his papers to the Bishop, and appeared himself at the appointed time. But on his arrival he was informed that as his papers did not arrive in season, and other circumstances were not satisfactory, he was not admitted a candidate. He earnestly entreated an interview with the Bishop, which was condescendingly granted. The Bishop questioned him respecting the circumstances of his past life, his family, prospects, and reasons for entering the ministry. To all of which he answered with unreserved sincerity and frankness. The Bishop notwithstanding still negatived his earnest request to admit him as a candidate at that inordination, but told him if he would procure his father's consent, and a letter from some clergyman in the neighborhood, whom he knew, he should probably admit him at the next ordination. This answer induced a kind of despair. He was personally known to but few clergymen, and they disapproved his attempt, considering it in a high degree presumptuous. He was now in his twenty-sixth year wholly without the prospect of a decent

maintenance; his father was decidedly against his design, of course he had little or no hope of succeeding. Having spent a short time in London, viewing its curiosities, (it being his first visit) and in visiting some relatives, from whom he received, what he considered inappropriate counsel, undeserved rebuke, and a few small presents, he commenced his journey home, by a circuitous rout, the direct way being about 130 or 140 miles, and walked most of the way. He reached Braytoft at noon, after walking twenty miles that morning, and having dined, resumed his ordinary habit, and sheared eleven large sheep in the afternoon.

While we admire the frankness and energy of character, displayed by the subject of this memoir, we cannot but reflect for a moment on the motives by which he was actuated in aspiring to the clerical character. Previous to ordination he would be expected to answer in the affirmative to the following questions. "Do you trust that you are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost, to take upon you this office and Ministration to serve God for the promoting of his glory and the edifying of his people? Do you think you are truly called, according to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, and according to the canons of this church, to the ministry of the same?" But he was altogether governed by worldly motives, a desire of a less laborious, and more comfortable way of living, with the expectation of more leisure to employ in reading, of which he was

inordinately fond—and a hope that he should one day distinguish himself in the literary world. So far from thinking himself "moved by the Holy Ghost," and called according to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ," one thought of the sacredness and responsibility of the office seems not to have entered his mind. That he was not cut off in his sins, but spared to make known the riches of divine grace, is cause of grateful joy to the church of Christ.

Mr. Scott's attempt to obtain orders excited much curiosity and conversation, attended with no small degree of ridicule, even beyond the sphere of his personal acquaintance. This raised the family pride of his connexions, and though they regretted the attempt, they were unwilling to have it fail. In consequence of this sensation his brother and all his sisters met by appointment at their father's house, and with their mother, urged upon him as his indispensable duty, either to consent to his ordination, or settle him on a farm. Accordingly after much debate, he gave his consent in writing to his son's entering into orders. Thus the difficulty which Mr. Scott regarded as insuperable, was unexpectedly surmounted, by which his hopes revived, and he was prepared to struggle against other obstacles that might intervene.

Despairing of obtaining a letter to the Bishop from any clergyman in the vicinity, he applied to the vicar of Boston, who had some know-

ledge of his mother's family. The vicar treated him with much candour, yet as a truly conscientious man, he said justly that he could not sign a testimonial, except for the short time that had passed since he first came to his house, but could give a favourable account from that time. And if he could get any suitable attestation from respectable persons, though not clergymen, he would transmit them, with his own letter to the Bishop. Thus encouraged he went again to reside at Boston where he applied diligently to his studies ; but was frowned on by his relatives, and ridiculed by the multitude.

At the ensuing Michaelmas ordination (Sept. 20, 1772) he was admitted a candidate, and examined with regard to his qualifications for ordination at Buckden by the Arch-deacon ; after examinaton on other subjects, he was questioned concerning the nature of miracles ; how real miracles might be distinguished from counterfeit ones ; and how they proved the truth of the doctrines in support of which they were wrought. This was, indeed, almost the only theological topic which he had studied with any tolerable attention. The Arch-deacon perceiving he began to be alarmed, kindly said, "You need not be uneasy ; I only wished to try what you are capable of ; and I perceive that christianity has got an able advocate in you." He was accordingly ordained deacon by the Bishop of Lincoln.

On the Saturday evening previous to his ordination, the curacies of Stoke Goldington, and Weston Underwood in Buckinghamshire, were proposed to him. He had no pecuniary inducement to accede to the proposal, but the idea of appearing as a clergyman in a neighbourhood, where he had not been known in any other character induced him to listen to it. He went immediately from Buckden to Stoke Goldington, and having made the necessary arrangements for his removal there, returned to his friends in Lincolnshire. And now congratulations from every quarter, took the place of censure and ridicule. Of so vast importance is success or failure, in fixing credit or discredit on our undertakings. His former business could not remain a secret at Stoke : his frankness of manner soon let it be known, and his company was much desired by the farmers who hoped to get useful hints from him concerning their own business.

As a specimen of his early correspondence, and a confirmation of what has been said concerning his state of mind at the time, the following letter is inserted which was written to his sister, the evening after the ordination.

"Buckden, Sept. 20, 1772.

"Dear Sister,—Success is always agreeable ; though there is a success that would have been mortifying ; but mine is of the most agreeable sort. Compliments, high compliments from

both Dr. Gordon and my fellow candidates. As I have a little time to spare, I shall endeavour to give you a sketch of my companions here. The first I shall mention is a Scotchman, a man of parts. To a sound judgement he joins a most ready wit, and an agreeable affability. He tells a story in his Scotch dialect in the most humorous manner imaginable. He is equally qualified for serious or literary conversation; and I have contracted something of an intimacy with him. His fault is, that he is too sensible of his own abilities. The next is a most solemn ignoramus; a member of the university; who knows just as much Latin as I did when I had been two years at Scorton. He is in deacon's orders: so, in solemn consultation, we made a theme for him; and, as he is a man that bears a good character, Dr. G., I believe, knowingly overlooked it. Had we not assisted him, it would have gone nigh to have killed him. The third is a methodistical gentleman. He forms a very good contrast to some of the company; they being too gay for their business, he is so sanctified that a song, a game at cards, or a joke, is to him a most capital offence. This I could overlook; but his opinions are not mine; and I had a duel with him, on my first arrival, concerning justification by faith alone. I believe each claimed the palm of victory: I however, had the audience on my side. A fourth is a good-natured harmless person, no university man, who is easily pleased, and en-

deavours to please those about him : so I think I ought to have placed him a little higher in my list. The next is of the same class, but a less able person. The rest are Oxonian and Cantabrigian bucks, who know more of the wine and girls of their respective universities, and of setting-dogs, race-horses, and guns in the country, than of Latin and Greek, or divinity. The arch-deacon sweated two of them pretty well : but I believe they must pass muster. In the examination I did what I wish undone,—I assisted one of them in his theme, both with thoughts and Latin, whom I have since found to be very unfit for what he is going to undertake : and, without assistance I am certain he would not have succeeded. You must excuse my vanity : at the present time I cannot avoid it. You may depend on the sincerity of my prayers and good wishes for you all, and that I am your affectionate brother."

Speaking of his ordination, he afterwards says, " considered in all respects, I deliberately judge this whole transaction to have been the most atrocious wickedness in my life. But I did not, at the time, in any degree regard it in this light, nor did I till long after feel any remorse of conscience for my *prevaricating*, if not directly *lying* subscriptions, and declarations, and all the evils of my motives and actions in the whole concern. While I was preparing for the solemn office, I lived as before in known sin, and in utter neglect of prayer ; my whole pre-

paration consisting of nothing else, than an attention to those studies which were more immediately requisite for reputably passing through the previous examination.

Some passages from the 'Force of Truth,' a book which he afterward published, containing an account of the change of his views on religion, may here be advantageously placed before the reader,—"At this period," says the author—referring to the time when he lived at home with his father, subsequently to his apprenticeship—"though I was the slave of sin, yet, my conscience not being pacified, and my principles not greatly corrupted, there seemed some hope concerning me: but at length Satan took a very effectual method of silencing my convictions, that I might sleep securely in my sins: and justly was I given over to a strong delusion to believe a lie, when I held the truth that I did know in unrighteousness. I met with a *Socinian* comment on the Scriptures, and greedily drank the poison, because it quieted my fears, and flattered my abominable pride. The whole system coincided exactly with my inclinations, and the state of my mind. In reading this exposition, sin seemed to lose its native ugliness, and to appear a very small and tolerable evil; man's imperfect obedience seemed to shine with an excellency almost divine; and God appeared so entirely and necessarily merciful, that he could not make any of his creatures miserable, without contradicting

his natural propensity. These things influenced my mind so powerfully, that I was enabled to consider myself, notwithstanding a few little blemishes, as upon the whole a very worthy being. At the same time the mysteries of the Gospel were explained away, or brought down to the level of man's conception, by such proud and corrupt, though specious reasonings. By acceding to these sentiments, I was, in my own opinion, in point of understanding and discernment, exalted to a superiority above the generality of mankind; and I pleased myself in looking down with contempt upon such as were weak enough to believe the orthodox doctrines. Thus I generally soothed my conscience; and if at any time I was uneasy at the apprehension that I did not thoroughly deserve eternal happiness, and was not entirely fit for heaven; the same book afforded me a soft pillow on which to lull myself to sleep. It argued, and I then thought proved, that there were no *eternal* torments; and it insinuated, that there were *no* torments, except for notorious sinners; and that such as should just fall short of heaven, would sink into their original nothing. With this welcome scheme I silenced all my fears, and told my accusing conscience, that, if I fell short of heaven, I should be annihilated, and never be sensible of my loss."

"In this awful state of mind I attempted to obtain admission into holy orders! As far as I understood such controversies, I was nearly

a Socinian and Pelagian, and wholly an Arminian."

"Thus with a heart full of pride and wickedness; my life polluted with many unrepented, unforsaken sins; without one cry for mercy, one prayer for direction or assistance, or for a blessing on what I was about to do; after having concealed my real sentiments under the mask of general expressions; and having subscribed articles directly contrary to what I believed; and after having blasphemously declared, in the presence of God and of the congregation, in the most solemn manner, sealing it with the Lord's supper, that I judged myself to be 'inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take that office upon me,'—not knowing or believing that there was any Holy Ghost,—on September the 20th, 1772, I was ordained a deacon."

"For ever blessed be the God of all long-suffering and mercy, who had patience with such a rebel and blasphemer; such an irreverent trifler with his majesty; and such a presumptuous intruder into his sacred ministry! I never think of this daring wickedness, without being filled with amazement that I am out of hell—without adoring that gracious God, who permitted such an attrocious sinner to live, yea, to serve him, and with acceptance, I trust, to call him father, and as his minister to speak in his name. *Bless the Lord, O my soul, and, all that is within me, bless his holy name! Bless*

the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits! who forgiveth all thy iniquities, and healeth all thy diseases; who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies! May I fervently love, and devoutedly serve that God, who hath multiplied his mercies in *abundantly pardoning* my complicated provocations!"

Notwithstanding Mr. Scott's severe censure on himself, it is not to be supposed that his conduct was worse than that of many others, who rush uncalled into the sacred office. He viewed the subject in the glass of the divine law, where sin appears in its true colour. It is sincerely to be desired that all, who are thus guilty, would take a similar view of their conduct, and imitate his subsequent engagedness in the cause of Christ.

In this connection, it may not be improper to mention an incident, which, though trivial in itself, was important in its consequences. At the sheep-sheering which followed his disgraceful return from Alford, in 1762, a small ewe lamb, marked with a black spot on the side, in rather a peculiar manner, attracted his notice, and was given him by his father, and though kept among the sheep, was branded as his. Though he was always nearly moneyless, he never yielded to the temptation to sell any of the lambs which this ewe brought him, so that he possessed sixty-eight sheep, besides lambs, when he attempted to obtain orders. These,

after many objections, his father purchased for sixty-eight pounds; and this constituted the whole of his property. With this sum he paid the expenses of his whole course for the ministry; consisting of books, board, clothing, travelling expenses, &c., and had twenty guineas remaining when he entered on his curacies.

It is also worthy of remark, that notwithstanding his irascible and undutiful temper towards his father, he never retained resentment against him, but quickly returned to some sense of filial duty. This may be seen in his repeated returns to his father's assistance after leaving him.

CHAPTER III.

Curacies of Stoke Goldington and Weston Underwood—Entrance at Clare Hall—Studies—State of the part of the country in which he was situated—Death of his sister—First acquaintance with Mr. Newton—Marriage—Family Worship.

We are now to contemplate the subject of our memoirs in his new and higher character of a minister of the established Church of England. His regular services were at Stoke and Weston Underwood. He took lodgings at Stoke and for a while officiated at Gayhurst, by which means he became acquainted with the family of

George Wrighte, Esq. by whom he was treated with much attention, and an acquaintance commenced, which had an important bearing on his future life.

Soon after Mr. Scott's ordination he learned that clergymen not educated at the University could enter at Cambridge, and without residence, might after nine years take the degree of Bachelor of Divinity. And as it was represented to him as one step towards that distinction which he coveted, he went to Cambridge for the purpose. There his vanity was gratified by the applause he received. He entered his name at Clare Hall, where it remained several years; but afterwards, finding it too expensive for his income, and becoming interested in concerns of infinitely more consequence than worldly honours, he withdrew it.

No sooner was he fixed in a curacy, than he applied himself closely to the study of the learned languages, and such other subjects as he considered most conducive to his future advancement. He spared no pains, shunned as far as he could with propriety, acquaintance and diversion, and retrenched from his usual hours of sleep the better to accomplish his object. At the period of his visit to Cambridge, nine months after his ordination, he had read through the entire works of Josephus in the original Greek; which is of itself no ordinary proof of his diligence.

The following is his own account of his stud-

ies, contained in a letter to his sister, dated Sept. 18, 1773. "I have for some time pursued my studies with assiduity, but I have only lately got to pursue them with method. I am now about three hours in the day engaged in the Hebrew. The books I use are a Hebrew Bible, grammar and Lexicon, the noted Septuagint, or Greek translation so much talked of, and a comment. I began at the first chapter in Genesis and I intend to go through the whole Bible in that manner. You will see the manifold advantage of thus reading the scriptures. The original text, a Greek translation two thousand years old and above, our translations and comments, read carefully and compared together, word by word, cannot fail to give a deep insight into the sense of the Scriptures; and at the same time, two languages are unitedly improving. The same I am doing in the Greek, and profane history. I am reading old Herodotus in the original, in Latin and English. For each book read, whether ancient or modern history, I have my maps laid before me, and trace each incident by the map; and in some degree also fix the chronology. So that, though the languages are my principal study, history, geography, chronology, divinity, go hand in hand. Neither is logic neglected. I have set about that in some degree; not the dry scholastic forms, but the useful art of tracing our judgements to their origin, and building our reasons or references on due foundation; or the art of

arguing justly from well grounded principles. In the writing way I have just now begun a very arduous task, but, I hope, not too arduous. I have fixed upon our saviour's sermon on the mount, and have undertaken in a course of sermons to go through it. My design is to shew, that in that short discourse is comprehended every christian virtue, every moral duty; that it is not, as is generally apprehended, a loose set of detached maxims, but a regular, consistent system of morality. What I shall make of it I know not; but I think I shall, by well considering each article, comparing it with other parts of scripture, and the situation of man in this world, find out many beauties, at least to me before undiscovered. I have already found in it far more than ever I observed before, or than other authors I have consulted have noticed, I will assure you, the propriety of each sentence, the wisdom, the thorough knowledge of the human heart, appear to me most admirable."

"You now see in what manner I spend my time. I find my taste for study grow on me every day. I only fear I shall be like the miser, too covetous. In fact I really grudge every hour I employ otherwise. Others go out by choice, and stay at home by constraint; but I ever stay at home by choice, and go out because I am persuaded it is necessary. In every other expense I am grown a miser. I take every method to save: but here I am prodigal. No cost do I in the least grudge to procure advan-

tageous methods of pursuing my studies. So far is a multiplicity of studies, a diversity of pursuits, from overburdening my memory, that by exercising it, I find it in a high degree more retentive; as well as the comprehending faculty more quick. Nothing can give greater satisfaction than these considerations do. I proceed with alacrity; I think with expedition. Of the Hebrew, some twenty weeks ago, I knew not a letter; and I have now read through one hundred and nineteen of the Psalms, and twenty-three chapters of Genesis; and commonly now read two chapters in the time above mentioned, tracing every word to its original, unfolding every verbal difficulty. But enough; I know to whom I write; I am sensible that these things will give you some pleasure in the perusal, and that you will overlook any spice of vanity which may appear."

We here see the means by which he was led by Providence to become such "an able advocate for the truth." The result was probably the farthest imaginable from his views, at the time of which we are speaking. During all his thirst for knowledge and distinction, he never neglected his weekly preparations for the Sabbath. Indeed diligence seems to have been an elementary ingredient in his character. May it not suggest a salutary admonition to many clergymen who it may be hoped, are actuated by purer principles, than at that time influenced the subject of these memoirs?

Mr. Scott was situated in a part of the country where the people were generally poor and ignorant. He described it in this manner. "The country is pleasant, the villages large and populous; but the people poor, ignorant and idle. Half of them have little more knowledge, save the art of lace-making, than they were born with. There are no schools any where for the poor; and they have no means of instruction but at church, where the greater part never come. Those that have any religion are almost all methodists and fanatics of one sect or other; and for my part, I regard them as the best portion of my parish, for any religion is better than none. A part of the country affords a better prospect, but taking the whole, I think it remarkably poor and ignorant; though within fifty miles of the metropolis of the most polished country in the world." Mr. Scott appeared actuated by a laudable desire to do these people good, and as we proceed we find this desire gradually gathered strength. From Weston where he had removed his lodgings, we find him writing in 1774. "I wonder people think they cannot do good. The circle I move in is at present so contracted that the circumference almost touches the centre; yet I should belie my own heart, should I say that I never had it in my power to do good, I hope, (for God alone knows the heart,) that I have been instrumental in my calling, towards instilling better principles into the minds of some of my flock. This,

at least, is my desire: from this I promise myself present satisfaction, and something in future of more consequence." A year later, speaking of Stoke he says. "Stoke is an ignorant, and for that reason a wicked place. I would wish to do something to remove both the cause and the effect. They are also as poor as they are ignorant and vicious. Now, assisting their bodily wants is the best means to prepare the way for assisting their other wants. But my station in life prevents my doing much in that on my own account. But by means of my intimacy at Mr. Wrighte's, I am not totally destitute of opportunity. When any person is sick, I make it my business to visit him, both in my pastoral functions, and as a friend, to inquire into his disorder and circumstances, which done, I represent the case to Mr. W. who has not hitherto failed to consider one so represented. This prepares the way for good advices and instruction, and also renders others more willing to attend to me." He took particular care to form the minds of youth, and impart to them moral and religious instruction.

In 1773 he lost a sister, whose death had a very powerful effect on his mind. He felt it to be his duty to take upon himself the education of her youngest son, to whom he was God-father, and accordingly sometime after took him into his family, and though his means were limited, supported him, till at a proper age, he bound him apprentice to a grocer.

While Mr. Scott resided at Stoke, the brother of the person with whom he boarded, an apothecary at Olney, often called and conversed with him on various subjects. This gentleman once mentioned Mr. Newton, (the famous Mr. John Newton) as a very singular character. He gave him full credit for blameless and benevolent conduct, and for diligence as a minister, but said he was an enthusiast in a very high degree. "I cannot" said the Apothecary, "tell what judgment to form of his preaching, it is like nothing which I ever heard; I wish you would come and hear him and tell me what you think of him. He preaches on a Thursday evening; come and dine with me, and we will go to church together." This was accordingly settled and executed. Mr. Scott sat in front of the pulpit, and thought Mr. Newton looked directly at him when he entered the desk. When he named his text, to his great astonishment it was this. "Then Saul (who is also called Paul) filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him, and said, O full of all subtlety and all mischief, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord." Acts xiii, 9, 10. As he knew Mr. Newton preached extempore, he took it for granted, he had chosen the text on his account. Mr. Scott thought the doctrine abstruse, imaginative and irrational, and Mr. Newton's manner uncouth. And the impression, that though Elymas was named, *he* was intended, remained on his

mind for some time. Nor was it wholly effaced till he discovered some years after, that he was regularly expounding the Acts of the Apostles, that this passage came in course that evening, and that, in fact, he neither saw nor thought of him. The idea that he was aimed at, served him at that time as a subject of merriment, and afterwards, when he knew Mr. Newton better, but had not obtained an explanation, it appeared to him unaccountable.

In January, 1774, while Mr. Scott resided at Weston, two of his parishoners, a man and his wife, lay at the point of death. He heard of the circumstance, but according to his general custom, not being sent for, took no notice of it, till one evening, the woman being dead, and the man dying, he heard that his neighbour Mr. Newton, had several times visited them. Immediately his conscience reproached him with being shamefully negligent in sitting at home, within a few doors of the dying persons, his general hearers, and not visiting them. It occurred to him, that whatever contempt he might feel for Mr. Newton's doctrines, his practice was more consistent with the ministerial character than his own; he must have more zeal and love for souls or he would not have walked so far to visit and supply his lack of care for those, who as far as he was concerned, might have been left to perish in their sins. He humbled himself before God, and resolved to be more attentive to his duty in future. He

went without delay to visit the survivor ; and the affecting sight of one person already dead, and another expiring in the same chamber, deepened his impressions, confirmed his resolutions, and from that time he was constantly attentive to that part of a parish minister's duty.

While curate of Weston Underwood he was induced by a friend to read the conclusion of Bishop Burnett's History of his Own Time. His perusal of that part which relates to the clergy, was attended with important effects. He was instructed and impressed by it. Was convinced that his entrance into the ministry had been the dictate of wrong motives ; was preceded by an unsuitable preparation, and accompanied by very improper conduct. At this period he lived without any secret religion. His convictions, however, would be no longer silenced or appeased, and he entered upon a form of devotion—formal indeed in some respects, for he neither knew that Mediator through whom, nor that Spirit by whom prayers are offered with acceptance unto the Father. Yet his mind was, even at this time, evidently approximating towards that happy consummation to which it at length arrived : happy for him, happy for the church.

Mr. Scott had always avowed his resolution to marry as soon as he should have the prospect of maintaining a family, and his ambitious projects never altered his purpose. After many merciful disappointments, as he afterward found

them to be, he became acquainted with Miss Jane Kell whom he first met at a christening, and won her money at cards. She was of a respectable family in Northumberland, but her father not having profited by the wise man's admonition, *He that hateth suretyship is sure*, had impoverished himself to pay other men's debts, which rendered it necessary for their children to procure their own livelihood. She was now Mr. Wrighte's housekeeper and had continued so long in the family that she was respected as a relative. Mr. Scott was married Dec. 5, 1774. The connection proved a happy one, and met the approbation of all his friends. Though Mrs. Scott was not found in an elevated station, she was, through life, and in all circumstances, a "help meet" for him to whom she was united. She was one of those disinterested, friendly, cheerful and kind persons who conciliate the esteem of all their acquaintance. She possessed in an eminent degree, sense, prudence, and sensibility, and was admirably calculated for the management of domestic concerns. She possessed the advantages of a good education and much reading, and was endowed with refined and generous sentiments. One proof of her generosity was her declining his first proposals, though perfectly agreeable to her, because she believed the connection would be disadvantageous to him. This he learned directly from Mrs. Wrighte, without Mrs. W's being able, either previously, or at the time she told him the fact, to imagine who had been refused.

With regard to Mr. Scott's finances, it may be proper to observe, that at this time, his salary and other perquisites amounted to nearly £60. In addition to this he was engaged by Mr. Wrighte to instruct his son in the first rudiments of learning; going to his house, three miles distant, every day for that purpose, for which he received £30.*

Neither Mr. nor Mrs. Scott had been much coversant with religious persons. Neither of them understood the grand outlines of the gospel, though both of them had a strong impression of its general truth and importance. Her impressions were deeper than his, and met with less counteraction from false principles and evil habits. Before they had commenced housekeeping, the thought seemed to occur to both simultaneously, that they ought to pray together; accordingly he read prayers from a book. On commencing housekeeping he established family worship, though he had never lived in any family where it was practised, nor ever been present at such a service, except once, which was in the house of a dissenting clergyman. At first he only used a form, from a manual belonging to his wife. After a little while he accompanied it by a portion of scripture; and as his views of religion gradually improved, he exchanged his manual for Jenks' Devotions. At length he was led to adopt extemporaneous prayer, and by

* English Money. £1 being equal to $4 44.

degrees proceeded to expound, as well as read the Scriptures to his family. This practice he continued through life. Sometimes he had relatives visiting in his family, to whom the practice was so disagreeable that they would not, by change of posture, profess to join in his family devotions.

To young people who have been religiously educated, it may seem strange that any person should arrive at the age of twenty seven years, be settled in the Gospel ministry, and have been, but once in his life, present at family worship. It is believed such a circumstance could not occur in New England. Yet even here, there is an awful neglect of this important duty. It is surprising that any who live in christian society, especially any who call themselves christians, should live in such open violation of duty. Bent, as the human heart is, to depart from God, how destructive to the youthful mind must be the tendency of living in families where there is no acknowledgement of a Providence, nor outward form of worship sustained; where they meet with nothing to remind them of God their Creator, and Christ their redeemer; that they are accountable creatures, and probationers for eternity. Among the various means of grace afforded us, none can have a happier tendency, than to be reminded of the being, perfections, and providence of God, by the daily returning seasons of devotion.

CHAPTER IV.

Removal to Ravenstone—Birth of his two eldest children—Correspondence with Mr. Newton—Some alterations in his religious views—Letters relative to this subject—Devotes himself to his calling—Extemporary preaching.

Within a few months after Mr. Scott's marriage, he was led unexpectedly to exchange his curacy of Stoke for that of Ravenstone, the next village, and removed to that place in the summer of 1775. He resided there but a short time, though he retained the curacy until 1781. "At this place," he says, "I resided about two years, and it proved, as it were, a Bethel to me. Here I read the scriptures and prayed. Here I sought, and, I trust, found in a considerable measure, the knowledge of *the truth as it is in Jesus*. I was not indeed, brought to say with unwavering voice, as Thomas did of old, *My Lord and my God;* but I learned to *count all but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ*. Here I was first made the instrument of bringing several persons earnestly to ask the all-important question, *What must I do to be saved?* and here I learned, in some degree, to give the scriptural answer, *Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.* I did not however enter so deeply into the practical use of the truths to which I acceded, as might have been expected; but in many things which I have since considered as wholly indefensible, I conformed to the

world, and, by so doing, was, in great measure, sheltered from scorn and reproach."

The first sermon he preached after having embraced these new views of religion was from Gal. iii, 22, *The scripture hath included all under sin*, which was the means of awakening many to serious consideration; and a considerable number of persons, who had been previously ignorant and careless about religion, became consistent and zealous christians. Here his two eldest children were born. The first a daughter, died at the age of four and a half years. The other a son, survived him.

About this time he commenced a correspondence with Mr. Newton. At a clerical meeting in May 1775, they exchanged a few words on a controverted subject. It was in the room with the clergy, and Mr. Newton prudently declined the discourse; but a day or two after he sent him a short note, with a little book for his perusal. This was exceedingly gratifying to Mr. Scott, and he gladly embraced the opportunity which seemed to offer, expecting his arguments would prove irresistible, and he should have the honor of rescuing a well meaning man from what he considered his enthusiastical delirium. He accordingly wrote him a long letter hoping to draw from him such avowal and explanations of his sentiments as might introduce a controversial discussion of their religious differences. But he did not succeed in his object. Mr. Newton returned a very friendly letter but declined

all controversy. The correspondence commenced in this manner, and nine or ten letters were exchanged. Mr. Scott used every endeavour to draw Mr. Newton into controversy. Mr. Newton, on the other hand, shunned every thing controversial, and filled his letters with the most useful and least offensive instruction, and such matter as he judged suited to help him forward in his enquiries after truth. Mr. Scott found he could not obtain his end, and at his suggestion the correspondence was discontinued, and the acquaintance was, for a season, almost wholly broken off. For a considerable time they seldom met, and then only interchanged a few words on general topics of conversation. Yet Mr. Newton repeatedly told him, to his no small offence, that he would one day accede to his religious principles; and he constantly informed his friends that Mr. Scott, though slowly, was surely feeling his way to the knowledge of the truth. This expectation was principally grounded on the following circumstance. In May, 1775, while Mr. Scott's thoughts were much engrossed by some hopes of preferment, one Sabbath, during the time of divine service, when the Psalm was named, he opened the Prayer Book to turn to it, and his eye met the eighth article of Religion which respects the authority and warrant of the Athanasian creed, which immediately arrested his attention. His disbelief of the doctrine of the Trinity, and his pretensions to candour, both combined to excite his

hatred to that creed: for which reason he had been accustomed to speak of it with contempt, and to neglect reading it officially. No sooner, therefore, did he read the words, "that it was to be thoroughly received, and believed; for that it might be proved by most certain warrants of holy Scripture," than his mind was greatly impressed and affected. The matter of subscription immediately occurred to his thoughts, and from that moment he conceived such scruples about it, as remained insuperable, till his views of the whole system of Christianity were entirely changed After a violent conflict between interest and conscience, he determined not to subscribe. His hopes of preferment were thus deliberately relinquished; and with an increasing family, he was left, as far as human foresight could discern, with little other prospect than poverty and distress. He afterwards discovered that his objections to the articles were groundless, and that much self-sufficiency, undue warmth of temper, and obstinacy were discoverable in his conduct. But his adherence to the dictates of his conscience, and holding fast his integrity, in such trying circumstances, was justifiable and even praiseworthy.

Letters written in the crisis of such a conflict, which is known to have had such an issue, and laying open the whole soul of the writer, cannot fail to interest any one, who takes pleasure in studying the workings of the human mind, and the operations of divine grace upon the heart.

The following letters from Mr. Scott to his sister are of this character.

The first is to his eldest sister, dated at Stoke, July 12, 1775—in the interval between Mr. N.'s first and second letters to him.

"Both from information of what passes around me and my own experience, I am convinced that this is a fluctuating scene of restless agitation, and that the only way to enjoy any tolerable degree of comfort, is by a constant endeavour to keep *a conscience void of offence*, and to attain to something of an indifference in regard to this world, fully trusting in God, that he will make all things work together for good to them that fear him, and endeavour before all things to obey him. As this is written *to* one that knows what trouble is,—so is it written *by* one, who, among blessings which he has received from the God of goodness, has also experienced troubles, and does so yet; and is now more likely than ever to meet with trials, more than in general fall to the share of man. We should learn to place a more firm and steady dependence on the wisdom and goodness of our heavenly friend and father, and more firmly to believe those promises he has made us; so as not to be driven from our confidence in the day of trial and gloomy disappointment, being assured that he will never forsake us, if we forsake not him. As Christians we should remember that troubles are the touchstone of our faith, patience, meekness and resignation; and, if well supported, will *work for us a more exceeding weight of glory.*

"I now turn to my own affairs. I had rather not speak concerning them but for two things: first, lest you should hear of them from others; and, second, lest you should think I had not that confidence in you that I have in others. I know I cannot speak of them without saying a great deal, and perhaps at last without saying so much as to excuse me in your mind from censure. I have had too ambitious and interested views, and have placed my expectations and desires too much on the emoluments of the ministry, and too little on the labours. In my studies and schemes I have more anxiously consulted by what means I might advance myself, than how I might make myself useful as a minister of the gospel. But it has pleased Providence, that, by means of those very studies on which I founded my hopes of advancement, but which have been carried on in a direction much different than I intended, I have arrived at a disposition of heart, and a train of thinking, which are totally incompatible with all my hopes of preferment. In one word, I have discovered the importance of that trust which is committed to me; what is the extent of that duty it requires; and how it ought to be performed: and I find it something inconceivably different from what one would suppose it to be, from the too general, and well nigh universal conduct of those to whom it is committed. I have also discovered what true unadulterated Christianity is, and find it not exactly what even *our* creeds and articles represent it.

I have arrived, in point of conscience, at perhaps an unnecessary scrupulousness, insomuch that I cannot, either through hopes of gain and favour, or through fear of loss and censure, do a thing that my heart disapproves. I have arrived at a critical nicety in examining and weighing expressions, and comparing one thing with another, which I endeavoured to attain as a step to advancement; but the supreme Director has turned it into an insurmountable obstacle. Within sight, as it were, of preferment, I have met with what has put a period to my present expectations, and has caused me formally to renounce them." He then states his disapprobation of many things in the Articles, and particularly his utter repugnance to the Athanasian creed, both its doctrine and its damnatory clauses; and then proceeds: "This is the trial that is now upon me. If by subscription be meant an avowed assent to the truth of every proposition contained in what we subscribe, I can never subscribe these Articles, without telling a most audacious lie in the face of God, in a solemn and important matter of religion, for the sake of sordid lucre. Such a lie would wound my conscience, and forfeit His favour, *in whose favour is life;* and riches would make me but poor amends. On the other hand, if I resolve not to subscribe, I must at present renounce all my aspiring hopes, and be content to be a poor, and perhaps despised curate, and censured into the bargain. But yet this is the far better side of the question;

for God has promised, and I dare believe, that he that *seeketh the kingdom of God and his righteousness*, shall be supplied with what He sees that he wants: that he, who leaves any worldly treasure *for his sake and the gospel's*, shall be amply rewarded even in this life: and that him, who is *not ashamed of Christ and of his words*, He will not be ashamed to own; and the contrary. I have therefore chosen this side of the question, and hope by God's assistance to persevere therein. But, should preferment be offered, I shall venture to ask, whether the above be the right definition of subscription or not. If they mean any thing else, and will say so—I mean that a man may subscribe without believing every part —I then could subscribe. It is true, subscription would be then a farce: but that is their business. But, by the unaccountable conduct of Mr. W., the affair is noised so much abroad, that I do not suppose I shall ever have an offer: nor do I desire it. I am at present very composed, and resigned to my disappointment; and only wish for a rather better curacy, in a parish where I could live, and spend my whole time in the duties of my function. At first I was sadly agitated, which was increased by the warm censures I received. In addition to other things, I doubt I have in part lost Mr. W.'s favour. But that God in whom I trust, and in obedience to whom I act, can raise me up another and better friend. He has supported me hitherto, and has brought my mind to a dependence on him: and I do not

fear that he will leave me destitute. I have but 80*l.* a year in all, (including payment for the tuition of Master Wrighte,) and it is not very improbable that I may get a curacy of that value alone, as I do not mind what confinement it brings, nor how much work I do. Besides, I deem it my duty, (could I do it,) to confine myself entirely to my office as a minister, which, whatever people may think, is employment sufficient for any man, when it is duly discharged.

The following is to his youngest sister, (afterwards Mrs. Ford,) dated the next day, July 13, 1775.

"Dear Sister, Amidst a hurry of concerns, I undertake to write an answer to your kind letter: but can never answer it in any thing of a correct manner, as my head is full of thoughts, and my heart of cares. As to the affair which engrossed my last, I can say but little, lest I should again fill my sheet about it. Every day more firmly convinces me, that my cause is the cause of truth, and makes me more resolved to adhere to it at all adventures, confiding in God Almighty for support and assistance. I mean, that I will never purchase preferment at the price of subscription—if by subscription be meant an avowed assent to the truth of every proposition contained in the thirty-nine Articles. If those who require subscription will put any more favourable construction upon it, that may alter the case.

"Since I wrote my last, I have had severe trials, of which I must give a brief account. I

wrote a letter with the intention to publish it, which I resolved first to shew Mrs. W., as I thought it was using Mr. W. ill, if I did not make known my resolution to him, that he might not trouble himself further on my account. Accordingly I did let her see it: and the consequence was, that for several days I was almost baited out of my life. All manner of accusations were heaped upon me:—vanity, hypocrisy, obstinacy, &c. I was tempted on one hand with hopes, and alarmed on the other with fears. Even *starving* was mentioned. But such arguments were made use of, as shewed me the weakness of the cause that needed them. Conscience, religion, Providence, a future scene, were all made a mere jest of. But I was bold, and did not betray the cause of God and religion, but preached them some such sermons, (I mean in conversation,) as they never had before heard, I think. However the letter was sent, but not published; which I cannot account for, as I desired the printer to send it back, if he did not choose to publish it. But, strange to tell, these very persons who opposed my publishing—which, among bad consequences might have produced good ones, (as every body allowed the letter to be unanswerable, and, at the same time, modest and decent, and such as would in some measure apologise for itself,)—these very persons spread the report all over the country, so that no one can be ignorant of my sentiments and resolutions; yet none has the opportunity

of seeing the reasons, on which they are grounded, fairly stated. At the same time I gave considerable offence by my endeavours to preserve a degree of authority over my pupil, which occasioned some disagreeable circumstances. These censures, added to the trial of relinquishing all my fond hopes, and renouncing my worldly interests, and aggravated by all the terrours, by which, in the day of trial, every thing is magnified, was well nigh more than I could bear. But by God Almighty's assistance, to whom I applied for direction and support, in a manner that, I hope, was acceptable through his mercy, I soon composed my agitated mind, and reduced it into a state of resigned acquiescence in his will, and trust in his promises. In adherence to the cause which I think good, I am ready to resign all my worldly expectations, and to sell all that I have, take up my cross, and follow my Lord and Master. To this state of calm composure I arrived chiefly by reading the Gospels, and supposing the promises therein contained addressed to me by divine veracity: and I have by that means, joined with prayer to God for direction and assistance, arrived at that state of mind, as to be ready to give up all my aspiring thoughts, and to content myself to serve God in the humble condition of a curate, if such be his will: though I cannot, nor can all the world, exclude me so effectually from preferment, but that God can give it me, if he sees good. This

advantage I most certainly reaped from it, that it has caused me more carefully to examine the holy scriptures, and to turn my thoughts more to these subjects, and to the consideration of that important trust which is committed to me, and how I may discharge it, so as, while I preach to others, I may not be *myself a cast-away.* This has been a most valuable acquisition, as I was before too apt to judge by comparison, and to think I did enough, if I did rather more than others: but now I find that, as I have been solemnly dedicated to the service of God and religion, I can never do enough, so long as I leave any thing undone, which it was in my power to do, towards the growth of religious knowledge, and virtuous practice. I have found that those, who enter the ministry for the sake of the riches, and honours, and indulgencies thereby to be obtained, are guilty of a most aggravated crime: and that a zeal for the propagation of the Gospel and the salvation of souls; a willingness to undertake *any* labours, and an alacrity in undergoing them; a ready submission to inconvenience, and a constancy amidst difficulties; being capable even of bearing contempt and censure, or poverty, when laid in the way of our duty; a warm benevolence; and that kind of humility which can condescend to the meanest offices for the sake of doing good; are the indispensable dispositions for a faithful minister of the gospel. We are *to live at the altar:* but a *living*, a bare decent maintenance,

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

without any avaricious or ambitious views of advancing ourselves or our families, or hankering after indulgencies, should content us. We are required to set an example of moderation, and trust in God and his promises; of heavenly mindedness; laying up our treasures in heaven; setting our affections on things above; having food and raiment being therewith content; in order that, with the greater advantage, we may, as we are in duty bound, inculcate these things on our flocks;—all this I have learned, or confirmed to myself, and have, by God's grace, fixed my resolution to endeavour to attain. And, being assured that, if I do so, he will never leave me destitute, I am perfectly contented, as far as relates to this affair, only desiring that I may be able to persevere in my duty, and, with an entire dependence, leaving the further disposal of my concerns to God."

The last extract is from a letter to Mrs. Webster, dated Ravenstone, October 15, 1775. "In what you say of my religious scruples, you seem in several errours concerning me and my conduct, which I must endeavour to rectify. You seem afraid I should lose all this world's goods. Remember our Saviour's words, *Whosoever he be that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple:* that is, if he be not *ready*, to forsake all that he hath, when his duty requires it. Not that I have any reason to apprehend I am likely to be put to that severe trial. Thanks to the Almighty, my circum-

stances mend, my friends multiply, and I have reason to think that my reputation, as a faithful minister, increases rather than diminishes,—if one may judge by external respect, civilities, and favours. Not that I am so far ruled in my opinion of myself by what others judge of me, as to be reconciled to my faults because they are willing to pardon them. My conscience must be my judge in this world, and my Saviour in the next: and to them I appeal for the rectitude of my intentions. But even were I to be put to the trial of losing all my worldly goods, let me ask you, would you have me follow the example of the young man in the Gospel, who, sorrowing left Christ, rather than part with his large possessions? What think you of what our Lord says, *But seek ye* FIRST *the kingdom of God and his righteousness*, and all other things *shall be added unto you*? Dare you believe this promise or not? I DARE: and will act accordingly, by God's assistance. As to what you argue of my family, &c. I will take every honest precaution to provide for them: and I dare confidently submit the event to God, without once distrusting his veracity and goodness. Nor will I ever violate my conscience to provide for my family: at least I hope I never shall. Were I in your condition as a private Christian, the subjects of my scruples would give me no concern: and I join in the whole liturgy of the church, some very few things excepted, with the highest satisfaction. As to my preaching, I neither preach

for or against any human inventions. The word of God is my subject and my rule; and my preaching, I may venture to say, is more calculated to satisfy than to raise doubts and scruples. Without preferment I may live, and live comfortably and happily: but without a clear conscience I cannot. I am a minister of the church of England, and hope to continue so, as I prefer her liturgy, her discipline, and her doctrine, to that of any other society of christians in the universe: and if, by subscribing her articles, they will declare they mean no more than such a preference, I will subscribe: but, if they mean by subscription an implicit belief of all their doctrines, it is a price I will not pay for preferment. Mr. Lindsay I think in many dangerous errours, and I am sorry my father has got his book."

In these letters we see that though the writer was far from having obtained just views of christian doctrines, even of those doctrines which are most essential to the formation of the christian spirit and character he had received, that great principle of "obedience to the faith," which was sure, under the divine blessing, ultimately to bring him right; to lead him to the reception of every truth, and to submission to every duty, as they might be successively brought home to his conviction. It is presumed no one can doubt that he was at this time in the use of humble prayer to God, and attentively reading the scriptures. Indeed the right use of prayer—making God our refuge in time of

need—is apparent, and the genuine effect of true prayer follows, which is composure of mind in committing events to God, while we keep in the path of duty.

During part of the time that Mr. Scott resided at Ravenstone, he daily attended Mr. Wrighte's son; but in proportion as he became more decidedly attentive to religion, his company was less agreeable, and some difference arising about the management of an indulged child, he was dismissed from his employment. For some time afterwards he lived on terms of civility with the family, but on his decidedly adopting and avowing evangelical sentiments, the connection was, as nearly as possible dissolved. As Mr. Wrighte was an influential character, the loss of his influence in his favour, was a serious disappointment. Some part of that time also, he had two young relatives from London under his care as students, but having learned to trust in the Providence of God for temporal subsistence, and finding snfficient employment, in *learning* and *teaching* religion, he relinquished the business of tuition, and solemnly vowed before God, never more to engage in any pursuit, study or publication which should not be evidently subservient to his ministerial usefulness, or generally, to the propagation of genuine christianity; and for several years he scarcely opened a book which treated of any thing besides religion. This, however, did not continue to be the case when his decisions were

made and his mind well stored with theological information. Then his reading became more various and extensive. But the determination at that time, so solemnly formed, so faithfully kept, and eventually productive of such important results, must certainly be noticed as a very observable point in Mr. Scott's history. The proceeding was characteristic, shewing his usual determination of mind. Considering the ambitious views which had influenced his entering into orders, and the deliberate sacrifice of those views which was made by the resolution before us, we can hardly avoid looking upon it, as marking a mind just arrived at that point of its christian progress, at which, after many delays, many hesitations, and misgivings, conflicts and fears, perhaps for the consequences, it is at length brought to *count all but loss for Christ,—finds the pearl of great price*, and goes and sells all, that he may buy it. Blessed is that servant, called by the Lord to his work of the ministry, who thus gives himself wholly thereto. *His* profiting shall be known unto all men; *his labour shall not be in vain in the Lord; he* shall be *blessed in his deed.*

Notwithstanding Mr. Scott's determination with regard to his own literary pursuits, it became his sentiment that every student should be as excursive in his researches, as his particular calling would admit, and make all his acquisitions bear upon some useful object. He earnestly pressed young men to acquire solid

learning that they might consecrate it to the service of God. At this time he had no prospect of preferment, and little prospect of retaining the curacy he then held; yet with an increasing family, he seldom felt any anxiety about a comfortable support, and his wife fully concurred with him. She would say to him, "only act according to the dictates of your conscience; we shall doubtless be provided for." Yet whenever she saw that his eager spirit and violent temper were hurrying him into wrong measures, she uniformly checked him, and though not till much opposition on his part, she always carried her point, to his unspeakable benefit, as he afterwards acknowledged. After he had prepared his sermons for the sabbath, he constantly read them to her before they were preached, and at her suggestion he altered many things, especially in simplifying the language, and adapting it to the comprehension of his hearers. It may be proper to mention that Mr. Scott's practice of extemporary preaching commenced from this custom. Something had occurred in the parish, to which he thought it right to allude in the pulpit. But on reciting the sermon to his wife, she objected to it, and induced him to be of her opinion. He in consequence laid aside the discourse, and was thus on Saturday evening, left without one for the ensuing Sabbath. This rendered it necessary to address his congregation *extempore*, and succeeding in the attempt, he repeated it; and by

degrees, discontinued the use of written sermons. The change, however, was not made without a severe effort.

CHAPTER V.

Removal to Weston—Death of his Parents—Correspondence with Mr. Newton renewed—Sickness—Practice of medicine among the poor—Playing cards—Letter to his sister.

In the Spring of 1777, Mr. Scott removed to Weston Underwood, to a house afterwards known as the residence of the Poet Cowper. In the following August his father died. He had become reconciled to his son's being a clergyman, but not to his new views of christian doctrines. His mother died in October following. The death of his parents was to him a severe affliction, particularly on account of their own spiritual concerns. They did not give that evidence of having embraced the truth as it is in Jesus, which to him seemed desirable, and he considered his father's religious sentiments as peculiarly erroneous. Pious children who have buried affectionate, but unholy parents, can best judge of his feelings.

In a letter dated April 15, of this year, he thus adverted to his father's religious sentiments. "I am grieved whenever I think of some no-

tions which my father used to hold, which are so directly contrary to true christian doctrine, and grounded on self-dependence, which is most assuredly destructive of the whole scheme of justification through Christ. He has given me permission to write on these subjects, and I have written several letters already, which must, I think, convince him, that man has no ground to hope for acceptance with God on his own account, or through his own poor deservings. It is amazing to consider what havoc this self-dependence makes among the christian duties. Gratitude for abundant mercies received, and praise and thanksgiving in consequence; prayer to God for forgiveness, for assistance, and for acceptance; in short, every part of piety and the love of God suffer exceedingly from these notions; and so doth humility, which is of all others the most needful to our acceptance with God, who *resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.* Indeed I cannot conceive that a man can become a christian, who does not feel that he is a poor lost sinner, that has no hope but from God's mercy through Christ."

About the time of Mr. Scott's removal to Weston, his intercourse with Mr. Newton, which had been suspended since the termination of their correspondence in December 1775, was renewed. Having occasion to call upon him when under some discouraging circumstances, he derived such consolation from his conversation that he contracted a strong affection for him.

From that time he was inwardly pleased to have him for his friend, though not as afterwards did he rejoice to *call* him so.

Mr. Scott received £170 from his father's estate, but as he was obliged annually to draw upon the principal, it was gradually exhausted. He had frequent attacks of sickness. After one long and dangerous illness, which had occasioned heavy additional expense, his wife, who generally exercised much fortitude, lamented the increase of their debts, as the medical charges amounted to more than £10. Trusting in Providence he confidently said, "Now observe if the Lord do not in some way send us an additional supply to meet this expense, which it was not in our power to avoid." In the afternoon of the same day, while he was absent on parochial duties, a gentleman called and left him a paper which entitled him to £10 from a sum of money that was left for the relief of poor clergymen. To persons who are accustomed to observe the operations of divine Providence, this will not appear strange. Many are the kind interpositions in favour of the children of God, who exercise strong faith in him, nor are they confined to pecuniary concerns.

About this time Mr. Scott began cautiously, and under the direction of an eminent Physician, to administer medical assistance to his poor neighbours. He had previously paid some attention to the study of medicine, and now having a skilful adviser, he increased his knowl-

edge, and had considerable success. This benevolence eventually added nothing to his expenses, as he received medical assistance gratuitously ever after.

In this year (1777) Mr. Scott's religious enquiries were brought to a decisive result. In the course of it his views became clear, and his sentiments established successively upon the doctrines of the atonement, human depravity, the Trinity, justification, the work of Holy Spirit, and finally on personal election. He was also enabled, after many conflicts with himself, to make his last and most self-denying sacrifice, that of reputation; and calmly, yea cheerfully, to suffer reproach, and to be accounted a fool for Christ's sake. About the close of this year he began to hear with profit Mr. Newton preach; and being established in the belief of the great truths of the gospel, to cherish their proper influence upon his own heart and life, and performed his parochial duties with increased assiduity and faithfulness.

Some extracts from a letter to his sister, of the 15th April, may bear both on the facts which have been just related, and on those which are next to follow.

"It is an uncommon degree of fortitude to be able to set one's face against the world, and to act contrary to its received maxims and customs. The soldier, who is bold as a lion in the day of battle, turns coward here, and dares not refuse a challenge, though his reason, his religion, the

laws of the land, and his own inclination, are all directly contrary to it: though his life and soul are at stake. Such a tyrant is custom! Who dare oppose him? I will tell you who: the confirmed Christian. *Who is he that overcometh the world? Even he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God. And this is the victory, even our faith.* These are the only men who ever dare to obey God rather than man, where the two are in direct opposition. But it is not every Christian, no, nor every good and pious Christian, who can thus courageously act, and undauntedly follow the dictates of conscience, when friends, relations, and all those whom one had been used to reverence and love, are of a contrary opinion; especially if the case be dubious, and much may be said on both sides. This is the last victory the Christian gains. He will master, by that grace which is given of God, his own lusts and passions, and all manner of inward and outward temptations; he will be dead to the interests, pleasures, and diversions of the world; and his affections will be earnestly set upon things above; long before he has mastered this fear of men. Here I find my own deficiency, as much or more than in any other respect: and often I feel an inward timidity, when about to preach an unpopular doctrine, or expose a foible which some one of my congregation, whom I otherwise love and esteem, is remarkable for, and in every instance I feel the greatest reluctancy to resign the good opinion,

or act contrary to the judgment of those for whom I have an esteem. It is true I am peculiarly bound to strive against this, by reason of my ministerial office. I am to speak boldly, *not as a man-pleaser, but as a servant of God:* and therefore I endeavour to master all these fears, and to act implicitly as my conscience suggests, without respect of persons. Conformity to others in things unchristian, the fear of men, a servile spirit of time-serving, &c. are the faults of ministers, and effectually hinder even those who desire it, from performing the most important parts of their ministry, both in public preaching and by private application. But this kind of spirit goeth not out but by a very spiritual and devout course of life. Indeed its expulsion is the gift of God, and is to be specially sought for from him. To betray the more important, in order to secure the lesser interest, is a thing I could not do; and I have too great an opinion of your sincerity in your profession as a Christian, to think you would wish it. But perfection is not attainable here; and, had we nothing else to trust to for acceptance with God, but our own imperfect righteousness, we should have little to support us, and should have a strong temptation to despair, as soon as ever we became acquainted with the strictness of God's law, and our own transgressions of it, daily and hourly repeated. But thank God, the wound is no sooner given, than the remedy is applied: our self-dependence is no

sooner undermined, than we are supplied with a more sure ground of dependence, even the merits and sufferings of our crucified Redeemer. May you and I, and all ours, have, by true, lively, humble faith, an interest in him!"

In the summer of 1777, Mr. Higgins, a gentleman resident in Weston, returned from London in a very ill state of health. Mr. Scott looked upon him as in imminent danger of death, and as wholly unprepared for that solemn event, yet no one gave him any intimation of his danger. Mr. Scott felt it his duty to do it; but the task was a difficult one. He was not only much older than himself, but his superiour and benefactor, and he was fearful of offending him and his family, should he attempt to warn him of his danger. He, however, resolved to be faithful, and leave the event; and after committing the case to God, he wrote him an affectionate and faithful letter, informing him of his danger, and his own fear respecting his future state. This letter was thankfully received by the sick man, and he was requested to visit him as a minister, which he did as long as Mr. Higgins lived, and lost no favour by his faithfulness.

It has been observed that Mr. Scott's religion had not that *practical* effect that was desirable. The following is proof of the justice of that remark, and also of his willingness to conform to duty when made known to him. In the former part of his life, he had been exceedingly fond

of cards, even to gaming. Ill success on one occasion had cured him of that propensity; eager pursuits, after other objects had rendered cards an *indifferent* amusement, though he occasionally played, that he might avoid the appearance of too much precision in religious practice, considering it a harmless, though frivolous amusement. In Jan. 1778, being on a visit to one of his parishioners in Ravenstone, after dinner he called on some of the poor people in the neighbourhood; when a female remarked to him, "I have something which I wish to say to you, but I am afraid you may be offended." He answered that he could not promise, but hoped he should not. She then observed, "You know A. B. he has lately been attending to religion, and has spoken to me concerning the sacrament; but last night he with C. D. and some others, met to keep Christmas, and they played at cards, drank too much, and in the end quarrelled, and raised a sort of riot. And when I remonstrated with him on his conduct, as inconsistent with his professed attention to religion, his answer was, 'There is no harm in cards, Mr. Scott plays at cards.'" This smote him to the heart. He saw that if he played at cards, however soberly and quietly, the people would be encouraged by his example to go farther. And if St. Paul would eat no flesh while the world stood, rather than cause his weak brother to offend, it would be inexcusable in him to throw such a stumbling block in the way of his

parishioners. So far from being offended at the hint thus given him, he felt thankful to his faithful monitor, and promised her that she should never have occasion to repeat the admonition. In the evening he related the circumstance to the company, and avowed his determination never to play at cards again, and from that time he wholly renounced the practice.

Instead of being harassed with solicitations, he was never asked to play afterwards as he expected. He also refrained from riding on the sabbath, when he found that his parishioners made it an excuse for spending a considerable part of the day in riding for business or convenience. It is to be wished that clergymen in this respect, would follow his example. Though they may improve the time spent in riding on the sabbath in devout contemplation, it is not to be expected, that those who make use of their example as an excuse for attending to worldly business on the Lord's day, will spend the time in that manner. If clergymen walk near the brink, others will fall down the precipice. If it is *lawful* for them to ride on the sabbath, it certainly is *not expedient*.

Mr. Scott's unreserved avowal of the change which had taken place in his religious views and purposes, even induced most of his acquaintance to avoid him; thus he escaped hearing the many scoffs and reproaches which were uttered against him in his absence. His vicar at Ravenstone, in proportion as he became more decided in his views, and discriminating in his

preaching, showed much hostility to his proceedings.

At Weston Mr. Scott was much afflicted in his family; he buried two children, and the only surviving one was dangerously ill, but was mercifully spared, and survived his father. There he wrote and published his well known "Force of Truth."

It was Mr. Scott's unhappiness, that in embracing the truths of the gospel he incurred the opposition not only of his acquaintance but of most of his relatives; though they were ultimately brought to acquiesce in his sentiments. The following letter to his youngest sister, dated July 27, 1779, will show with what spirit he encountered their opposition, the state of his own mind at that time, and that though he had a certain roughness of exteriour, he possessed an affectionate heart.

"Hitherto," he says, "I have kept silence, *yea even from good words: but it was pain and grief to me.* I would, however, once more remind you, that you have a brother—who was no hypocrite when he assured you that he loved you, at least as well as any relation that he had in the world, his wife and children excepted; that your interest and welfare were always near to his heart; that he would have been glad, if it had pleased God, to have had it in his power to evidence this to you by some important service: that his love is not waxed cold, nor in the least diminished, but on the contrary; that he

loves you as well, and wishes you better than ever; and that, seeing he can do nothing else, he never forgets, in his daily prayers; to commend you and yours, soul and body, to the love, care and blessing of his God and Saviour. Dear sister, I can truly say with Paul, that *I have continual sorrow and heaviness in my heart, for my brethren according to the flesh:* but on account of none so much as you. All the rest, though not seeing with my eyes, are friendly and civil, and not willing quite to give me up: but you have totally turned your back to me:—the favourite sister, whose heart seemed so closely knit to mine by the dearest and most confidential friendship, as the nearest relative ties! The very thought brings tears into my eyes, and I weep while I write to you. And what have I done to offend you?—It has pleased the Lord, through my study of his word, with prayer for that teaching which he hath promised, to lead me to a different view of the gospel of Jesus Christ, than I had embraced: and not only so, but to lead me from seeking the favour of the world, and my own glory, to seek God's favour, aim at his glory, and derive happiness from him. A happiness I have therein tasted, to which I was before a stranger—that *peace of God which passeth all understanding*, and which as much excels, even in this world, any thing I had before experienced, as the cheering constant light of the noon-day sun exceeds the short-lived glare of a flash of lightning, which leaves

the night more dark and gloomy than before. Having found that good I had long been seeking in vain, I was desirous to tell all I loved, in proportion as I loved them, what the Lord had done for me, and how he had had mercy on me; that they might find, what I knew they too were seeking, true happiness. *Come, taste and see how gracious the Lord is, and how blessed they are that put their trust in him*, was the language of my heart. But, for want of experience and prudence, forgetting my own principle, that none can come to Jesus except he be taught of God, (John vi, 44—46,) I was much too earnest, and in a hurry: said too much, and went too far: and thus, out of my abundant love, surfeited you. *Forgive me this wrong!* It was well meant, but ill-judged, and worse received. O my dear sister, I wish you as happy as I am myself, and I need wish you no happier in this world. To call God my father; to confide in his love; to realize his powerful presence; to see by faith his wisdom choosing, his love providing for me, his arm protecting me; to find him (my sins notwithstanding,) reconciled to me, and engaged to bless me; to view him seated on a throne of grace, bowing his ear to my poor prayers, granting my requests, supplying my wants, supporting me under every trial, sweetening and sanctifying every trouble, manifesting his love to me, and comforting me by his Holy Spirit; to look forward to Heaven as my home; and to be able to say at night, when I go to rest, if I

die before morning, I shall be with my gracious Lord, to enjoy his love for ever: This is my happiness: and what is there in the world worth comparing with it?

'Let worldly minds the world pursue,
It has no charms for me;
Once I admir'd its trifles too,
But grace has set me free."

—Peace with God, peace of conscience, peace in my family, peace with all around me—these are *the blessings of peace* which God gives his people. May God give them to you!—I say no more upon doctrines: only search the scriptures, and pray to be taught of God. If I have said too much this time on the subject, I will say less next letter. Only acknowledge me as a brother, and do not quite disown me as an incorrigible fanatic, because I believe the scriptures, and exhort you to read them, and pray to understand them.

"I have written a book, now in the press, which will be published in three weeks time, giving an account of the grounds and reasons of the change you so much wonder at; chiefly for the use of my former friends. As you used not to consider me as a fool, do not condemn my book as foolish, without reading it, and that attentively: and, where we differ, do make it a part of your prayers, that whichever of us is mistaken may be directed to the truth."

CHAPTER VI.

Proposal of the Curacy of Olney—Small pox—Removal to Olney—The Poet Cowper—Journey to Lincolnshire—Increasing labours—Visit to Shropshire—Discourse on Repentance.

On Mr. Newton's removal to London in 1780, he proposed to Mr. Scott to succeed him in the curacy of Olney. To this he was extremely reluctant, being unwilling to leave Ravenstone; and presuming that his plain, distinguishing style would be unacceptable to the people in Olney. He was convinced that even from Mr. Newton, they would not endure what he should deem it duty to inculcate: and connected with his comparative youth, he felt confident they would not receive it from him. Mr. Newton's persuasions, however, with those of a few of his friends, extorted his unwilling consent. But as soon as it was known in the parish, such an opposition was excited, that the matter was abandoned.

About this time the small pox prevailed in Ravenstone, and as Mr. Scott had little confidence in the neighbouring physicians, and none in the nurses, he called in an eminent physician, and under him he acted the physician, apothecary, and almost nurse. Nearly all his time for some weeks was employed among the sick. Yet violent clamour was raised against him, and alarming threatenings uttered, because he al-

lowed his patients the free respiration of fresh air. Prejudices against inoculation were also very high, which occasioned him considerable perplexity. Notwithstanding, he still continued to attend upon the sick. He kept an old suit of clothes in a hovel at Ravenstone, and before going among the sick, changed his dress in the hovel, and again resumed his usual dress before he returned to his family. But he met with base ingratitude, and once deliberately resolved to go no more among the people. While cherishing this determination, the words of the Apostle, *Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good*, occurred to his recollection. It at once set him right, and converted his despondency into humble confession, thankful praises, and fervent prayer. He persevered in his labour of love, and the event proved highly gratifying and creditable. He spent much time during this trying season, in earnest, secret and social prayer; and every prayer seemed to be answered and exceeded. He had many vexations and perplexities, but would gladly have suffered them all again, if he might enjoy the same proportion of consolation, receive as much benefit to his own soul, and be instrumental of as much good to others. In this respect many christians will respond his sentiments. Though afflictions press them to the dust, underneath them are the everlasting arms, and they would willingly return to their sorrows to enjoy the consoling presence of their God.

Mr. Scott expended a considerable sum in medicines and cordials for the relief of the sick, for which, considering his circumstances, he was highly censured. But soon after he received from some person to him unknown, a sum more than sufficient to reimburse all his expenditures. A confirmation of the truth, that there is no risk in expending money, in an urgent case, and from good motives; and that a penurious prudence, springing from weak faith, is impolicy as well as sin. The divine direction is, "*Cast thy bread upon the waters*," with the promise annexed, "*Thou shalt find it after many days.*" Were we to consult our own temporal interest, we should more frequently invest our property in the never-failing bank of benevolence. There we are sure of compound interest for ourselves and our children. And when we have the glory of God in view, it is laying up treasure in heaven which will never fail. But aside from personal happiness, practical benevolence assimilates the character with that of our Beneficent Father, and diffuses happiness all around us. Who that has tasted the sweet delight of doing good, can ever look with satisfaction on hoarded treasure, or covet inglorious ease.

If like Mr. Scott, we meet with ingratitude and contumely for our most disinterested exertions, it is but the same return which we have already made to Him who died for us.

The person who succeeded Mr. Newton was unhappily selected, and proved a very unworthy

character, and left that place in about a year. A deputation, including some of his former opposers, called on Mr. Scott, and earnestly requested him to accept the vacant situation. He felt a reluctance to complying, hesitated for some time, and went to London to consult some clergymen of his acquaintance. They all considered it his duty to accede to the proposal, which he accordingly did. But the late curate of Olney, managed so as to secure to himself the parish of Ravenstone, very much to the affliction of Mr. Scott, who like other faithful pastors had a tender regard to the welfare of his spiritual children in that place. The new curate did much mischief there, but it was mercifully of short continuance. Mr. Scott's income at Olney was smaller than at Ravenstone, so that his removal there was not to his secular advantage. Indeed he was often very much straightened, and sometimes discouraged; but he continued faithfully to perform his parochial duties, and even more than could with propriety, be required of him. Ever after he embraced the peculiar doctrines of the Gospel, he constantly preached weekly lectures. His congregations were small but select. They mostly consisted of his spiritual children, and he gave them those particular instructions, cautions and admonitions which suited their peculiar circumstances, and which could better be imparted on such occasions than in the public assembly.

Many, who in the view of charity are pious ministers of the gospel, apparently consider it a waste of their time and talents, to write and deliver a lecture to a *few* hearers; as though a *few* souls were not worth their care. Preaching the gospel was not instituted for the display of talents, or the acquirement of wealth or fame, but to save souls and advance the Redeemer's kingdom. And those ministers, who from motives of disinterested benevolence, spend their time and strength for the spiritual good of their fellow creatures, are entitled to confidence and gratitude.

It will be recollected that Olney was the residence of the Poet Cowper. After Mr. Scott had resided there about a year and a half, Lady Austen took lodgings in the house which he occupied. This added £10 to his annual income. She was also instrumental in procuring a subscription for him. In the vicarage house at Olney, during Lady Austin's residence there, most of those events which are recorded in the life of Cowper relative to this period, occurred. Here the Task was imposed and undertaken. Here John Gilpin was told as a story in prose, and the plan formed of giving it circulation in verse. These may appear small incidents, in themselves considered, but as relating to the Christian Poet, they will not be uninteresting to the admirers of his works. At this place, Mr. Scott's fifth child, a son, was born, which lived only six months, and suffered much during its short

life. Soon after its death, he visited his friends in Lincolnshire, and derived much satisfaction from the journey. He found his friends more cordial, more disposed to listen to him, and some of them apparently pious. He was much animated, conversed freely and fluently upon religion, and returned home with sanguine hopes that good would be effected by his journey. Speaking of it afterwards in a letter to a friend, he said, "This it seems was more than my poor foolish heart could bear; there needed some bitter to counteract all this sweet; therefore my kind and wise Physician (having mercifully brought me home first) immediately discerning the danger, applied the remedy; and I am very base if I do not heartily thank him for it." The remedy was a severe attack of the asthma to which he was subject.

After Mr. Scott became curate of Olney he was gradually led into the practice of preaching lectures on week days (in addition to his weekly lectures in both his parishes) at various and distant places, where he had acquaintance who were desirous to hear him. This custom was expensive, and, owing to the state of his health, extremely self-denying. He often rode seventy or eighty miles, and preached four or five sermons between Monday morning and Thursday noon; while more than half the night he sat up in his bed, in houses where he was a stranger, unable to lie down from oppression of breath; and on his return home, and sometimes previ-

ously, was obliged to have recourse to strong antimonial emetics. His asthma was so severe that he was often obliged to apply a blister by way of preparation for his Sabbath labours. By means of this itinerary habit, Mr. Scott was rendered extensively useful. The Rev. Dr. Carey, well known as a Baptist missionary in Bengal, once said of him, "If there be any thing of the work of God in my soul, I owe much of it to Mr. Scott's preaching, when I first set out in the ways of the Lord." It must have been exceedingly gratifying to his benevolent heart to have been made instrumental in promoting the spiritual benefit of any one, but especially of such a distinguished mind as Dr. Carey possessed. How little do we realize the tendency of our actions on the eternal interests of others. It is well known that Dr. Carey is better entitled than any other individual, to the praise of having given the *first impulse*, to the extraordinary exertions of the present age, for extending the knowledge of christianity in the world. Yet it is probable that Mr. Scott little thought, when addressing the assemblies before him, that he was contributing to the formation of an individual mind, whose influence would be felt, not only in his own country, but in India, to the latest posterity. Nor need this remark be confined to public characters. The influence of the most obscure individual, though not so extensive, is as abiding, and will be the means either of increasing the number of those

who shall sing the song of Moses and the Lamb, or of peopling the dark regions of woe.

In the summer of 1783, Mr. Scott made a visit to Shropshire, and was there confined with a very dangerous illness for several weeks. So often was he under the chastising rod of his Heavenly Father, that we are led to wonder how he could find time to perform his almost incredible labours. At Olney he published a Thanksgiving Sermon, on the close of the American War, preached July 29, 1784. And about nine months after, his Discourse on Repentance. The latter was preached first at Olney, and afterwards at Paulerspury in Northamptonshire, where it was instrumental of permanent good in several instances. He wrote and enlarged it for the press, commonly with a child on his knee, or rocking the cradle, and his wife at work by his side; for a study and separate fire, were a convenience of which his resources would not admit. He expected this work would be instrumental of doing much good; but it did not find a ready sale. Even of the "Force of Truth," ten years elapsed, before the first edition, consisting of a thousand copies, was sold, though afterwards nearly that number was usually sold annually. It was from such small beginnings that his publications began to be so extensively circulated on both sides the Atlantic.

CHAPTER VII.

Correspondence during the period of the preceding Chapter.

NOTWITHSTANDING the people at Olney had been favoured with such a minister as Mr. Newton for sixteen years, it was a very undesirable curacy. They were much divided, full of religious notions, and of that knowledge which puffeth up; while the love that edifieth was comparatively rare. There were, no doubt, many excellent Christian characters, but in general, the religion of the place was not of a sufficiently practical character. It will readily be perceived that such a situation would not be a pleasant one for a pastor. Mr. Newton's view of the place may be seen from the following extract of a letter from him to Mr. Scott, dated March 15, 1782.

"I likewise have preached at Leicester and Olney in the same week, and been conscious of the difference both in numbers and attention. I can assure you that, though I put the best face upon things, and was upon the whole comfortable, yet my chief comfort in my situation there latterly, sprang from a persuasion that I was in the post the Lord had assigned me; that he knew I was there, and why I was there; that, as a centinel, it would be unsoldierly to indulge a wish of being relieved sooner than my commander appointed. I thought, so far as my concern was dictated by a regard to the

honour of the gospel and the good of souls, it was right; but it was the smallest part which I durst assign simply to that cause; and that all the uneasy feelings of Mr. Self, on his own account, were not of that importance which he pretended. There were a few who loved me for the Lord's sake, and who, I could perceive, were fed and brought forward by my ministry; and, though they were but few, I durst not say that their edification and affection were not an over-recompense for all the disagreeables. Such considerations as these are present with you likewise. The Lord will support you and comfort you, and can, whenever he pleases, either make your service more pleasant at Olney, or assign you a more comfortable situation elsewhere. I never had one serious thought of a removal, till the evening I received Mr. Thornton's offer of St. Mary Woolnoth. Even then, when it came to the point, it cost me something to part with them: and had the proposal been made a year or two sooner, I should have found more difficulty in accepting it. His hour and His methods are best, and it is good to wait for him and upon him; for none who so wait shall be disappointed. When I first went to Olney, and for a good while afterwards, I had no more reason to expect such a post as I am now in, than I have now to expect a removal to Lambeth. But the Lord never is at a loss for means to effect his own purposes. He can provide friends, open doors, remove mountains,

and bring the most unlikely things to pass. And, when we have finished our course, if he is pleased to accept us, it will make no difference whether we die curates, or rectors, or bishops.

"One thing is needful: but this one thing includes many, and may be considered in various respects. The one thing for a sinner is to know Jesus and his salvation. The one thing for a believer is to live to his will, and to make him his all; to admire, contemplate, resemble, and serve him. A believer is a child of God; a minister is, in an especial and appropriate sense, a servant, though a child likewise. The one thing for a servant, or a steward in the house of God, is to be faithful; that is, to be simply and without reserve, or any allowed interfering motive, devoted and resigned to his will; to have no plan, connection, prospect, or interest, but under his direction, and in an immediate and clear subserviency to his interest. Happy the man who is brought to this point! How honourable, how safe his state! He is engaged in a league offensive and defensive with the Lord of heaven and earth: and in the midst of changes and exercises which can but affect the surface, if I may so speak, he has an abiding peace in the bottom of his soul, well knowing whose he is, and whom he serves.

"Indeed, my friend, I see, or think I see, such interested views, such height of spirit, such obvious blemishes, in some, who, on account of gifts and abilities, are eminent in the

church of God, as are truly lamentable. I adore the mercy of the Lord who has preserved you and me, and a few men whom I love, from those snares and temptations, by which some, as good and wise as ourselves, have been entangled and hurt. If I must blame, I would do it with gentleness, well knowing that had I been left to myself, in similar circumstances, I should not have acted better. Ah! deceitful sin—deceitful world—deceitful heart! How can we stand an hour against such a combination, unless upheld by the arm that upholds the heaven and the earth.

"I can say nothing about coming to Olney, but that I am willing if the Lord please. If I do, it must be soon after Whitsunday: a long while to look forward to! I cannot move without a supply, of which I have no present prospect: but he can provide if he would have me go. With him I would leave all. It is pleasant but not necessary to see each other. Oh! may we see him, and rejoice in him daily; and, as to all the rest, *Not my will, but thine be done.* So I wish to say. With love to Mrs. Scott from us both, I remain your affectionate friend,

JOHN NEWTON."

The following extracts from Mr. Scott's letters will shew his opinion of the place. "Olney is, I apprehend, as difficult a charge for a minister as can well be imagined, and I greatly feel my insufficiency; but if I look to Jesus, I cannot be discouraged: *his strength shall be perfect-*

and bring the most unlikely things to pass. And, when we have finished our course, if he is pleased to accept us, it will make no difference whether we die curates, or rectors, or bishops.

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church of God, as are truly lamentable. I adore the mercy of the Lord who has preserved you and me, and a few men whom I love, from those snares and temptations, by which some, as good and wise as ourselves, have been entangled and hurt. If I must blame, I would do it with gentleness, well knowing that had I been left to myself, in similar circumstances, I should not have acted better. Ah! deceitful sin—deceitful world—deceitful heart! How can we stand an hour against such a combination, unless upheld by the arm that upholds the heaven and the earth.

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ed in my weakness, and his wisdom in my foolishness: I must, however, enjoin you to pray for me: I have prayed for you long and often, and I trust the Lord has heard, and taught you to pray; now pay me in kind. I need this return, and shall much value it."

"You desire me to inform you how I like Olney: but it is impossible. I trust the Lord is with me, and I love his presence, and the light of his countenance, which entirely reconciles me to the numerous disagreeables that I otherwise do and must expect to encounter. I am satisfied that the Lord will not leave me to be needlessly discouraged; and, further, that I shall learn many a profitable lesson from the things I meet with: and, if I acquire humility, meekness, patience, prudence, and experience in this school, though it be not pleasing to the flesh, the spirit will rejoice. As to the people, they are pretty much as I expected: rather more divided. But I cannot tell how things will issue. I have taken a farm, which is a good deal out of heart; I am breaking up the fallow ground, ploughing, and harrowing, and sowing: but what sort of a crop I shall have, harvest time will best shew. Only I am sure *I shall reap in due season if I faint not.* I do not, however, repent coming."

It will here be seen that Mr. Scott's temporal situation was full of cares and labours. Yet he enjoyed much spiritual comfort during this period, Indeed he always looked back upon the seven

years, subsequent to his cordial reception of Scriptural truth, as those of his greatest personal enjoyment. The following letters to his youngest sister will shew the sweet contentment of his mind at that period.

"January 29, 1782. To see you as happy in that *peace of God, which passeth understanding*, and which, through Jesus Christ, *keepeth the heart and mind*, as I feel myself, is my ardent wish, and frequent, fervent prayer On Mondays, Wednesdays, and Saturdays, I am at your service; but I preach on the other evenings. You may likewise depend upon it, that I will not make your continuance at Olney disagreeable by religious disputes; for the Lord has almost spoiled me for a disputant. Waiting and praying are the weapons of my warfare, which I trust will in due time prove *mighty, through God, for the pulling down of all strong holds*, which hinder Christ's entering into, *and dwelling in your heart by faith*, and *bringing every thought into captivity to obedience to himself.* One expression in your letter encourages me to hope, that we shall, before many more years have elapsed, be like-minded; namely, where you seem to entertain a doubt of your being right, and do offer a prayer to God to set you right. Thus I began: in this I persevered, and do persevere, and have no more doubt, that it is God who taught me what I now believe and preach, as to the great outlines, than I have that God is faithful and hears prayer. You

wonder at my condemning you unheard, and think I have a worse opinion of you than you deserve. I will promise you I have not so bad an opinion of you as I have of myself. But the Bible condemns us all, moral and immoral, great sinners and little sinners, (if there be such a thing;) *that every mouth may be stopped.* Rom. iii, 19, and the following. Let me beg of you to read without a comment, to meditate upon, and pray over this scripture, especially that humbling text, *For there is no difference, for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.* No difference: all are guilty, all condemned malefactors, all must be saved in a way of grace, by faith, through Christ.

"June 25, 1782. Two things have concurred together to render it not easy for me to write, namely, many engagements and much indisposition. If the Lord be pleased to give us, (for he is the alone giver,) in the way of honest industry in some lawful calling, the necessaries and ordinary conveniences of life, just above the pinchings of poverty, and beneath the numberless temptations of affluence, we are then in the most favourable station for real happiness, so far as attainable in this world, that we can be; and we want nothing more but a contented mind: such a contented mind as springs from a consciousness, that of all the numberless blessings we enjoy we deserve not one, having forfeited all, and our souls too by sin; from a consideration of the poverty, and afflictions of the Son of

Lord is sovereign and owes us nothing; and therefore we have abundant cause for thankfulness for what he hath, in a distinguishing manner, done for us, but none to complain of what he denies us. *Be still and know that I am God*, is a lesson which all his people must learn experimentally. *Wait the Lord's time*, is another of the same sort. To love Christ even more than father and mother, and to desire his glory even more than their welfare, (which yet it is a duty to desire next of all,) is another very hard lesson which a true Christian must learn. But, when you have made proficiency a little in these lessons, you do not know what He who is *rich in mercy*, in answer to patient, persevering, believing, submissive prayers, may do for you. At all events you know he does hear prayer, and I dare venture to say, that your most earnest importunate prayers for your parents, are as sweet music in his ears; and that he delights to hear them, as offered through the intercession of Jesus. I lament much that there is so little of this spirit amongst professors of religion. If ever it become general, religion will spread in families and neighborhoods, as fire in a sheaf. *Where two agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them.* Try the experiment. Though it is very proper to drop a word now and then, yet I would advise you to be sparing in it, as it will be misconstrued into assuming and preaching. Meekness, attention, affection, and every expression of honour

and respect; a mixture of seriousness and cheerfulness; (which be sure you aim at—nothing prejudices more than an appearance of melancholy;) now and then a pertinent text of scripture; a hint dropped, and opportunities watched, when people are more willing to hear than at other times: this, accompanied with many prayers, is the line I would mark out. But *the Lord giveth wisdom;* and I doubt not he has been beforehand with me. I must conclude with wishing you *success in the name of the Lord.*"

The following are letters to clergymen of his acquaintance, and give a view of his sentiments on various subjects.

The two next letters are to the Rev. G. More, a Scotch minister, then situated in the north of England.

"April 14, 1784. I must frankly observe that I am not much attached to externals, being decidedly of opinion, that, had the Lord Jesus intended all his people to be of the same sentiments about church government, he would have explicitly declared it, as under the Jewish dispensation, and have rendered it impossible for godly, reflecting, and judicious persons to have differed much about these things: even as it is impossible for such persons much to differ about the method of a sinner's justification, or the nature and need of regeneration. Every man ought to be satisfied in his own mind about the lawfulness of communicating as a Christian, or officiating as a minister, in that society he be-

longs to, and leave others to judge for themselves; candidly supposing that men who are conscientious in other things are so in this: and, though they see not as we see, yet possibly their eyes may be as good as ours. In my own judgment, after I hope much serious and impartial consideration, I am a moderate Episcopalian, and a Pœdo-Baptist; but am entirely willing my brethren should be, some Presbyterians, and some Independents, and not extremely unwilling that some should be Baptists; rejoicing that Christ is preached, and the essentials of true religion upheld amongst persons of different sentiments, and only grieved that each one will be what he is *jure divino*, and judge and condemn others. I would only beseech all to leave *biting and devouring one another*, and to unite together in striving, as so many regiments in one army, against the common enemy. My avowal of my sentiments on this subject will help you to know your man, and what you are to expect. My post is very different from yours. There are above two thousand inhabitants in this town, almost all Calvinists, even the most debauched of them; the gospel having been preached among them for a number of years by a variety of preachers, statedly and occasionally, sound and unsound, in church and meeting. The inhabitants are become like David, *wiser than their teachers;* that is they think themselves so, and, in an awful manner have learned to abuse gospel notions, to stupify their conscien-

ces, vindicate their sloth and wickedness, and shield off conviction. There is an Independent meeting in the town, the minister of which is newly come amongst us, and for this and other reasons is very popular. He is, I doubt not, a godly man; but his preaching does not appear to me calculated to rouse a stupid audience out of their lethargy. There is also a Baptist meeting, the ministers of which, heretofore, by dry supralapsarian discourses, accompanied by little alarming, inviting, searching, or practical matter, have done much to bring things to this pass. If you are acquainted with the disputes about the *modern question*, you will need nothing more to be said on that system of *passivity* introduced by the strenuous deniers of its being every man's *duty* to believe. If you have not met with any thing on this subject, on another occasion I will write a little more upon it. But the present minister is a solid, judicious, and godly man, though not an awakening preacher. As for myself, I am very unpopular in this town, and preach in general to very small congregations. Before I came hither, I had two curacies in the neighbourhood, one of which I retain with Olney. There I have a people to whom the Lord has made me the instrument of good. They love me, and are a comfort to me. They are not very numerous, but so many as to prevent my complaining that I have quite laboured in vain; and the Lord adds to their number one and another from time to time. O that he would

multiply them a hundred, or a thousand fold! I have a few even at Olney who cleave to me, and a small number of those who are my own: but I labour under great discouragement in this respect, and am generally looked upon as unsound, legal, Arminian. The truth of the matter is, upon mature deliberation I am convinced that the preaching of the present day is not practical enough, or sufficiently *distinguishing* between true and false experience. I therefore speak more fully than most do of the moral character of the Deity; of the excellency, glory, and loveliness of that character as described in the word of God. From this I deduce the reasonableness and excellency of the holy law of God; which I endeavour fully to open in its extensive requirements. Thence follows man's obligation to love God, both on account of his infinite loveliness, and of our natural relations and obligations to him. Then I demonstrate the evil of sin, as apostacy from this lovely and glorious God and king, and transgression of his perfect law. Thence I shew the justice of God in the infinite, the eternal punishment of sinners; it being necessary that God should mark his hatred of this hateful thing, magnify his holy law, and shew his justice, that he might appear glorious in the eyes of all for ever, but rebels. Thus I suppose I *dig deep* to lay the foundation of the gospel of free grace: the necessity, nature, and glory, of the vicarious obedience and sufferings of Immanuel; the sufficiency of

his one sacrifice; and his ability and willingness to save to the uttermost all that come. Thence I shew that all who will *may* come, *ought* to come, and that all sin atrociously in *not* coming: that, however, it is in no natural man's heart to come; because each man is proud, selfish, worldly, and carnal: therefore, all are without excuse. But a God of sovereign grace, having mercy on whom he will, according to his own purpose, makes some willing, by regeneration. This changes the prevailing bent of the heart, and henceforth the man is not only humbly willing to be justified by faith, and saved by grace, but hates and repents of sin, loves God's law, loves holiness, and leads a holy life, sincerely, progressively, though imperfectly,—receiving from Christ daily grace so to do: and that all experience which has not this effect is false. *Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, &c.* My paper forbids more. This is the outline of my scheme. Pray animadvert upon it; for I would daily revise, correct, and improve it."

"May 25, 1785.—I am much at a loss what to say concerning your situation with your congregation. I have seen and heard of so many such things that I am really grieved; and discouraged respecting the success of the gospel in the dissenting congregations. No sooner does a minister begin in good earnest to address the consciences of his hearers, in an awakening, searching, and practical manner, and

there is hope that religion will revive, converts be made, and Christians quickened to adorn their profession; than some antinomian hypocrite, or some injudicious dry professor, whose tongue or purse has given him considerable influence, begins to form a party against the minister; to censure, browbeat, discourage, oppose, or expel him. Hence some are restrained; and, by the fear of man, *which bringeth a snare*, their ardour is damped; they feel themselves in thraldom; and, if they are not consciously unfaithful, they are forced to use such caution as cramps them in their ministration, and takes off much of their pungency. Others are turned out and reduced to great difficulty: but this is by far the best, as it throws them immediately into the care of the Lord, for whose sake they suffer, and who will certainly, in due time, provide for all who suffer for him. Thus a stupid congregation choose a pastor of their own cast, when a peculiarly alarming, heart-searching one is requisite; and so matters grow worse and worse. Or, if the pastor they choose turns out different than they expected, they either spoil or expel him: and thus, in many places, the form and notion are all that is retained of true religion. But the work is the Lord's, and from time to time he interposes, in some unexpected manner, and beyond hope brings about a revival. However, in this respect, *we* (of the church) have the best of it. My discontented ones, who have been numerous, have now left me in peace-

able possession: many more hearers fill up, and much more than fill up their places; and still the work of the Lord goes forward: nor hath their opposition done me any real harm, but I hope much good. I shall tell you a short story, by way of improving this part of your letter. A dissenting minister, (at Cambridge, I think,) preaching very practically, was found fault with by his people, who gave him to understand that they must part with him, if he did not alter the strain of his preaching. The poor man having a family, shrunk for a time; but it preyed upon his health and spirits; which his wife observing, plainly told him that he distrusted God out of fear of man, and was unfaithful; and begged of him to preach according to his conscience, and leave the event to God. Accordingly he did so, and was expelled. But just at that time a larger meeting, with a better salary, and a more lively people, being vacant, he was invited thither, and settled among them; lived in plenty; and preached with acceptance and usefulness, till removed by death. This is a matter of fact. Be but faithful then, my brother: never mince the matter: never fear man: plead God's cause with the people, and the people's cause with God; and make it your great business to live what you preach; and he will surely extricate you out of all difficulties. *When a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh his enemies to be at peace with him.*

"I am not of opinion that the system of *pas-*

sivity I mentioned is new to you. The word may be, but the thing itself you seem acquainted with, to your considerable uneasiness. A few words will explain my meaning. An *unconverted* man says, 'I can do nothing: if God would give me a heart, I should pray, repent, believe: but I cannot give myself a heart: if he will not, how can I help it? I must wait his time: perhaps he sometimes may, and sometime he certainly will, if I be one of the elect; and if not I must perish, and all I can do will signify nothing.' A *professor* says, 'I have declined and back-slidden: if God will be pleased to revive me I shall be restored: I must wait: I hope I have known better times: and He will not finally forsake his people' In this style they excuse their sloth and lukewarmness, quiet their consciences, stop their ears to exhortation, and, under pretence of passively waiting till God do all, and of giving him all the glory, fairly exonerate themselves of their guilt, and charge it all upon God!—Indeed Adam's race seem determined that the glory of the good and the blame of the bad should go together. The Arminian takes the blame of the bad to himself, and thinks it but reasonable that he should have the glory of the good too. The pseudo-Calvinist gives God all the glory of the good, but seems to think it reasonable that he should bear the blame of the bad also. But the true Christian says, 'To me, even to me alone, belong shame and confusion of face for all my rebellion, impenitence,

unbelief, and sloth, all my days: but to God alone belongs the glory of all the good wrought in me, or done by me ?' "

May 14, 1785, he writes: "My dear friend, Nothing could sufficiently apologize for my omission of writing, except your own. Nay indeed, though that does keep me in countenance, yet I do not think we are either of us excused. For a little time now and then spent in dictating a letter to each other might be the means of quickening both of us; as we have before now found conversation to be. Remember, *Iron sharpens Iron.* Therefore, whether you can cut yourself or not, try to whet me, and make me cut: and then I hope I shall try to return the obligation. I believe Satan prevails as much against the cause of Christ by persuading ministers to sit still, or merely to go on in the beaten round, without attempting any thing more, as in any other way. My conscience is never quiet and joyful, but when I am busy in some ministerial employment; not merely in acquiring, but in communicating the knowledge of divine things by my tongue and pen: not only by meditation endeavouring to affect my own heart, but, by some method or other, endeavouring to affect others, and stir them up to seek, trust, love, and serve the Lord. And, after a multitude of thoughts about pride, ambition, &c. influencing me to be active, (and they will insinuate themselves,) I am persuaded Satan would have me while away my life in inactivity, under preten-

ces of modesty, diffidence, and humility; and he never is wanting to furnish me with excuses for delaying or shifting services. But I beg of God to rouse us from this lethargy. Paul says to Timothy, *Be instant in season, out of season; preach the word;* and seems to think there is more danger of sloth, than of too great activity in the preacher of the Gospel. May the love of Christ constrain us, and compassion for perishing souls prevail with us, to leave no means untried to promote faith and holiness, and to bear testimony against irreligion and false religion: to awaken the careless, to undeceive the deluded, to allure souls to Christ, to encourage the humble, and stir up the believer to glorify God. Write soon a letter longer than the note you sent from Birmingham, and let me know how things go on in your soul, and in your congregation. *Stir up*, my brother, *the gift of God that is in you.* Now is the time to labour, and suffer hardship and reproach. It is both seed time and harvest, and it is shameful to sleep in either. *Cast your bread upon the waters.* Sow *in the morning, and in the evening*, and water it with many prayers; and, if you see it not before, you will see the fruit of it at the last day. Some little good is going on here, and we are waiting and praying for more: lend us your assistance in this particular.

"I should have been glad to be at Birmingham, but could not:—especially to have met you there.

"Desiring to remember you in my prayers, and requesting your prayers, I remain your very affectionate friend and brother,

THOMAS SCOTT.

CHAPTER VIII.

Situation at Olney—Proposal of the Chaplaincy of the Lock Hospital—Visit to London—Accepts the Chaplaincy—Obtains two lectureships—Friday evening Lecture—Suspected of Arminianism—Unpopularity—Institution of the Lock Asylum—British and Foreign Bible Society.

Though Mr. Scott's situation was in some measure improved in Olney, and his ministry in many instances blessed, yet he never could feel reconciled to a permanent abode there. He had not, however, the most distant prospect of any other situation, and his unpopularity at Olney was in itself a powerful obstruction to his obtaining any. While he was thus in some respects dissatisfied with his only prospect as to future life, he received a letter from the Secretary of the Lock Hospital in London, stating that it had been resolved by the managers to appoint a person to the office of morning preacher in the chapel, and visiting chaplain to the patients; that from what they had heard concerning him, they were of opinion that he would be a suitable person for the situation, and re-

quested him to visit London and give them an opportunity to hear him preach. This proposal was directly opposite to his own views of his peculiar talents. He therefore wrote a very plain answer, stating his views of the gospel, and determination to speak his mind in the plainest language, wherever he might be called to preach; and his consciousness of being totally destitute of those attractions of manner and eloquence which that situation demanded; but closed with consenting to go to London, and preach in their presence. Accordingly he did go, and preached two sermons in as plain and faithful a manner as he could, without attempting any thing different from his usual style, and expected that specimen of his manner would decide the minds of those concerned, against him. When about leaving the city, he was asked whether he would propose himself as a candidate at the ensuing election. He gave a decided negative answer. It was then asked, "But will you accept of the situation, should you be chosen without proposing yourself?" He replied, "I cannot tell, but certainly not, unless the choice should be almost unanimous. Having preached in the chapel, I shall now return home, and if I hear no more from you, you shall hear no more from me." In a few weeks, the election took place, no other person was proposed, and Mr. Scott was elected with only three dissenting voices. This was unexpected and he found reason to conclude that if he ac-

cepted the appointment, he should be plunged into serious difficulties and trials. Yet he did not dare to give a direct refusal, without taking advice upon the subject. It might be his *duty* to go, and personal feelings ought not to be consulted. The person whom he consulted, presuming he wished for the situation, forbore to advise him to the contrary. He was conscious, however, of being willing to give, to the most faithful advice, for, or against, acceding to the proposal, an attentive hearing, and careful consideration; that every step in the business was taken, on his part, with many earnest and anxious prayers for direction; but not finding the objections urged which he expected, he considered the offer made him as a call to a self-denying duty, and was afraid of sinning, should he refuse to accept it. "But," said he "had I heard all those things previously to my consent, which I heard subsequently, I certainly should not have consented. Thus I should have escaped much distress; but, taking the whole together, I now think I should have been far less useful."

Withholding advice when requested, is an unkindness which ought to be severely censured; unless it be in consequence of entire ignorance of circumstances in question. It shews an indifference to the happiness of the applicant which inflicts a wound upon the feelings. Some persons, through fear of giving offence, or from some less justifiable motive, suppress their ob-

jections to a proposed object, until it is too late to be of any service, and then express them fully. This is cruelty. A request for advice does not impose an obligation to implicit compliance. If it receive an attentive hearing, and careful consideration, accompanied with prayer for divine direction, it is all we are entitled to expect. If to this we add the observation of the wise and holy Halyburton, that "the promise of God *to direct our steps*, does not extend always to teaching *others* what is *our* duty," it may reconcile us to persevere in giving the best advice we can to those who request it, without requiring or expecting them implicitly to follow it.

Mr. Scott's own people, who were most attached to him, and most grieved to part with him, were convinced that he was called by Providence to remove, and that it was his duty to comply. But the situation would be extremely unpleasant and perplexing. He must be subject to a board of managers who were divided into parties, many of them thinking themselves qualified and entitled to dictate as to the doctrines he should preach; and his secular affairs would not be improved. But he did not foresee all the difficulties he would have to encounter. Had he been aware of the perplexities which awaited him, he would not have accepted the appointment, but would have considered it impossible for him to perform its duties; but God overruled it for the accomplishment of important benefit to his church. We have here an in-

stance of the overruling hand of Providence, in disposing our situation in life. Had he not accepted the situation, humanly speaking, his Commentary would not have been written, and the good which has been done by it, would not have been effected. And besides, by this means he was enabled to take a bold and decided stand against the defective and even corrupt representations of christianity, then prevalent in London. And we may be led to consider the unspeakable mortification and vexation to which he was subjected as the necessary trials of his faith, the preparatives for the peculiar services he was to render, and the requisite counterpoise to prevent his being *exalted above measure* by the flattering celebrity he was ultimately to attain. For though he had arrived at eminent piety, and possessed uncommon intellectual powers, he was still human, and consequently frail and sinful. Even St. Paul needed *a thorn in the flesh*, to prevent his being *exalted above measure*. However insignificant, as individuals, the children of God may appear in the eyes of men, they are of consequence in the view of Jehovah; he has important purposes to accomplish by them, and not a hair of their heads falls without his notice.

Mr. Scott's salary at the Lock was £80, nearly half of which was necessary for rent and taxes. He had expected that he could easily procure a lectureship which would afford him additional support; but in this he was disap-

pointed except in procuring one in Bread street, of which the salary was so small, that no other person thought it worth procuring. And also an appointment to preach at Lothbury, a distance of three and a half miles, every alternate Sabbath morning, at six o'clock, for a very small stipend. He retained his lectureship from 1790 till 1802. His congregation seldom exceeded a hundred persons, but his labours were of spiritual benefit to many of them. His duty was his pleasure. He ever stood ready for any kind or degree of work to which he might be called. His morning lecture, though a source of no emolument, was a pleasant service to him. Few persons would attend at that early hour who did not bear real love to the ordinances of God's house; and among them were many pious servants and others, who would generally be prevented from attending public worship at any other hour in the day.

During the whole of Mr. Scott's residence of seventeen years in London, he laboured under great pecuniary difficulties. Yet he was always provided for, though literally he did little more than receive *day by day his daily bread.* But his narrow circumstances were never any check to his unwearied and disinterested labours; and from the manner in which they were borne they served to ennoble his character. Dr. Franklin has familiarly remarked, that "it is hard to make an empty bag stand upright;" but however empty, Mr. Scott always stood

upright—not with the uprightness of integrity only, but of independence:—not that pride which refuses to receive and acknowledge an obligation, but that firm rectitude which will not sacrifice judgment to any consideration whatever.

The following letter from a lady who had resided in Mr. Scott's family will afford a precise and accurate account of his sabbath labours.

"The account I have been accustomed to relate of Mr Scott's Sabbath labours, is as follows, and my memory does not tax me with inaccuracy. At four o'clock in the morning of every alternate Sunday, winter as well as summer, the watchman gave one heavy knock at the door, and Mr. S. and an old maid-servant arose,—for he could not go out without his breakfast. He then set forth to meet a congregation at a church in Lothbury, about three miles and a half off;—I rather think the only church in London that attended so early as six o'clock in the morning. I think he had from two to three hundred auditors, and administered the sacrament each time. He used to observe that, if at any time, in his early walk through the streets in the depth of winter, he was tempted to complain, the view of the newsman equally alert, and for a very different object, changed his repinings into thanksgivings. From the city he returned home, and about ten o'clock assembled his family to prayers: immediately after which he proceeded to the chapel, where

he performed the whole service, with the administration of the sacrament on the alternate Sundays, when he did not go to Lothbury. His sermons, you know, were most ingeniously brought into an exact hour; just about the same time, as I have heard him say, being spent in composing them. I well remember accompanying him to the afternoon church in Bread Street, (nearly as far as Lothbury,) after his taking his dinner without sitting down. On this occasion I hired a hackney-coach: but he desired me not to speak, as he took that time to prepare his sermon. I have calculated that he could not go much less than fourteen miles in the day, frequently the whole of it on foot, besides the three services, and at times a fourth sermon at Long-acre Chapel, or elsewhere, on his way home in the evening: and then he concluded the whole with family prayer, and that not a very short one. Considering his bilious and asthmatic habit, this was immense labour! And all this I knew him do very soon after, if not the very next Sabbath after, he had broken a rib by falling down the cabin-stairs of a Margate packet: and it seemed to me as if he passed few weeks without taking an emetic! But his heart was in his work; and I never saw a more devoted Christian. Indeed he appeared to me to have hardly a word or a thought out of the precise line of his duty: which made him somewhat formidable to weaker and more sinful beings. His trials, I should think, (as you

would have me honest with you,) were those of temper. Never, I often remarked, was there a petition in his family prayers, for any thing but the pardon of sin, and the suppressing of corruption. His life, and labours, and devotedness, kept him from much knowledge of the world; but the strength of his judgment gave him a rapid insight into passing affairs: and upon the whole I should be inclined to say, he was one of the wisest men I ever knew. You know more than I can do of the nature and habits of his daily life. I can only say that, when fatigued with writing, he would come up stairs, where the Bible was generally open, and his relaxation seemed to be, talking over some text with those whom he found there: and I can truly declare that I never lived in a happier or more united family."

Mr. Scott's sermons were literally prepared the day they were delivered. For more than thirty-five years he wrote but four or five sermons, and they were occasional discourses, expressly intended for publication. Yet no one who heard him complained for want of thought, or for crudeness in his discourses: they were rather faulty in being overcharged with matter, and too argumentative for general hearers. An eminent chancery lawyer used to say that he heard him for professional improvement, as well as for religious edification; as he possessed the close argumentative eloquence peculiarly requisite at the bar, and which was found to be so rare an endowment.

It will be recollected that Mr. Scott was *morning* preacher at the Lock Chapel. There was also an evening preacher. In addition to these sabbath services there was a Wednesday evening lecture, which the two chaplains were to preach alternately. For some reasons, Mr. Scott did not consider that a useful service He therefore requested of the managers permission to preach on Friday evenings, the service to be wholly his own; which was allowed. It was his intention, at these lectures, to elucidate and enforce every thing relative to the christian temper and conduct. With this view he gave notice that he would lecture in an expository manner on the Epistle to the Ephesians in course. At first he was very well attended; his congregation generally consisting of more than three hundred persons. This continued while he was going through the more doctrinal part of the Epistle; though he applied the doctrines very plainly to practical purposes. But when he arrived at the latter part of the fourth chapter, apprehensions were entertained that he was not sufficiently Calvinistic in his preaching. And at length when he preached from the fifth chapter, on the words, *See that ye walk circumspectly*, &c. the charge was extensively circulated that he had changed his sentiments, and was become an Arminian: and he at once lost more than half his auditors. The Sabbath morning congregation was also much diminished, and dissatisfaction was manifested in the looks and language

of the managers, even such as had appeared most friendly: and he seemed to have no alternative, but either that of voluntarily receding from his office, or being disgracefully dismissed. But there was no place to which he could retire. On this emergency, amidst very many interruptions, and under inexpressible discouragement, he wrote, and preached the Sabbath morning following, (Nov. 26, 1785,) his sermon on Election and Final Perseverance. By the next week it was printed and ready for sale; and a thousand copies sold in about three days. While he was preparing this sermon, he dined with a large party, many of the party being managers of the Lock, and zealous in their way for Calvinism. In the evening it was proposed, according to custom, to discuss some religious subject; and being sincerely desirous of information, he proposed a question concerning the precise boundaries between Calvinism and Arminianism, respecting which so much prejudice against his ministry has been excited. With the exception of two dissenters, no one offered any thing to show that he understood the subject. So that when he concluded with his own remarks, it was allowed that he was more decidedly Calvinistic than the rest of the company. This conversation filled him with astonishment. He had not before conceived it possible, that men, known in the religious world, would have allowed themselves boldly to take a side and talk loudly in favor of a system of which they hardly knew the

outlines. Yet this was far from being an uncommon occurrence Many call themselves by names, or attach themselves to denominations of whose particular belief they are almost totally ignorant. But it is not ignorance alone that occasions their opposition to the preaching of the gospel; they hate the doctrines and the duties it inculcates. It is to be hoped the Sabbath School system, which has become so general, will effectually cure such an evil. On sabbath school teachers is laid the important task, not only of forming the religious character of the rising generation, but of storing their minds with religious knowledge, teaching them to discriminate between truth and errour; and of leading them to a thorough knowledge and love of the holy Scriptures. This institution appears to be one important step in bringing about that happy state of things, when all shall know the Lord. And as God works by means in the moral as well as in the natural world, it belongs to them either to accelerate or retard the approach of millenial glory.

Mr. Scott at this time had many instructions respecting his preaching, and some of the managers assumed a high tone of authority; but he answered them, "Gentlemen, you possess authority sufficient to change me *for* another preacher, whenever you please; but you have no authority to change me *into* another preacher. If you do not convince my understanding that I am in an errour, you can never induce me to

alter my method of preaching." His vexations, however, sometimes overcame his patience and fortitude. On one occasion he said to his wife, "whatever be the consequence, I will quit this situation, for I shall never have any peace in it." She promptly replied, "Take heed what you do. If you leave your station in this spirit, you will perhaps soon be with Jonah in the whale's belly." The check was seasonable, and procured his acquiesceance.

Various plans were devised to counteract the declensions of the congregation, consequent on his increasing unpopularity. Among others, a popular preacher offered, when in town, to take the Sabbath morning sermon gratuitously; and this was proposed to him with assurances that his income should suffer no diminution. He answered, "Gentlemen, I came hither for the work, and not for the wages; and if you take that from me, I will certainly go and seek employment elsewhere." This disconcerted the plan; which was, however, abandoned chiefly through the interposition of the Earl of Dartmouth (a constant attendant on the morning service at the Lock,) who remarked, "That he thought it would be better for the gentleman in question to reside on his living, and attend to his own flock, than to intermeddle with other men's affairs; and that, if the present preachers in the chapel were incompetent, it might be proper to dismiss them, but not in so disgrace-

ful a manner to supersede either the one or the other of them."

Every thing; however, still conduced to render Mr. Scott more and more unpopular; not only at the Lock, but in every part of London. Many who never heard him preach, were fully possessed with the idea that there was something very wrong in his preaching and temper. Even the charge of *scolding* in the desk was brought against him. But he was confident that his most awful warnings were the language of compassionate love, and were accompanied with many tears and prayers: and his most respectable and constant hearers, who often expressed dissatisfaction with his manner, never imputed to him a harsh and angry spirit in the pulpit.

During this time, almost his whole comfort as a minister arose from his labours in the hospital, which, with all the disgusting circumstances of the service, were far more pleasing and encouraging to him, than preaching in the chapel. He constantly attended twice in the week; each time preaching first in the women's wards, and then in the men's. He took the plainest portions of scripture, and spoke in a strain of close address to the conscience, and in a manner which he could not equal in any other place, and so as always to fix the attention, and often to affect the hearts, of his poor profligate auditors, and concluded each address with an appropriate prayer.

Mr. Scott's active mind and benevolent heart could not be contented while there remained any service to be performed which could benefit his fellow creatures. He saw the institution with which he was connected to be incomplete, especially so far as the female patients were concerned; as they had, in general, on leaving the hospital, no alternative, but to return to a vicious life, or encounter hardships which it could not be supposed they would have resolution to endure. That she would choose a virtuous course, with poverty, hardships and reproach, was more than could be expected from a patient just discharged from the Lock Hospital. Notwithstanding all his perplexities, therefore, he formed the plan of an Asylum, into which such of those unhappy objects as desired it, might be admitted on their leaving the Hospital. He wrote and printed a pamphlet on the subject, proposing a meeting to be held for the purpose of taking the subject into consideration. He enclosed it as a letter and left it himself at the doors of the nobility and principal gentry in the city. A meeting was held April 18, 1787, and with much difficulty an Asylum on a very small scale was formed. But it often seemed as though it must be relinquished for want of funds. For a long time the only return he met with, for his assiduity, was censure, even from persons from whom he least expected it. But it was evidently the means of salvation to some immortal souls. It

also served as a precedent for institutions which were afterwards established on the same general principles. During Mr. Scott's residence in the city he acted as its chaplain, and had the principal share in the management of its concerns. For several years he attended daily to conduct family worship and give religious instruction. His experience in the concerns of the Hospital and Asylum led him to disapprove in the strongest terms, the practice of young females repairing to cities for employment; considering certain ruin the almost inevitable consequence.

Notwithstanding Mr. Scott's removal from his people in Buckinghamshire, he still cherished a tender regard for their welfare. He sent them frequent supplies of books, wrote them pastoral letters, adapted to their particular circumstances, and afforded relief to their temporal necessities. In one of his visits to them, he wrote and preached a sermon on Phil. i, 9—14, which he printed for their benefit. He afterwards enlarged it, and printed it under the title of "A Treatise on Growth in Grace." But his publications did not sell, even so far as to pay the expenses of publishing. He concluded that he had mistaken his talent, and almost resolved to print no more. At this time he had much leisure, to which he refers in the following extract from a letter.

"For some time I had frequent invitations to meet dinner parties formed of persons professing

religion; and I generally accepted them; yet I seldom returned home without dissatisfaction, and even remorse of conscience. One day (the Queen's birth day,) I met, at the house of a rather opulent tradesman, a large party, among whom were some other ministers. The dinner was exceedingly splendid and luxurious, consisting of two courses, including every delicacy in season. Some jokes passed upon the subject; and one person, in particular, a minister of much celebrity, said, 'If we proceed thus, we shall soon have the gout numbered among the privileges of the gospel!' This passed off very well: but in the evening, a question being proposed on the principal dangers to which evangelical religion was exposed in the present day, when it came to my turn to speak, I ventured to say, that *conformity to the world* among persons professing godliness was the grand danger of all. One thing led to another, and the luxurious dinner did not pass unnoticed by me. I expressed myself as cautiously as I could, consistently with my conscience, but I observed that, however it might be needful for Christians in superiour stations sometimes to give splendid and expensive dinners to their worldly relations and connexions, yet, when ministers and Christians met together as such, it was not consistent; but should be exchanged for more frugal entertainments of each other, and more abundant feeding of *the poor, the maimed, the lame, and the blind.* (Luke xiv, 12—13.) Probably I was too point-

ed; and many strong expressions of disapprobation were used at the time: but I went home as one who had thrown a great burden from off his back—*rejoicing in the testimony of my conscience.* The consequence was, a sort of tacit excommunication from the circle. The gentleman at whose house this passed never invited me again but once, and then our dinner was, literally, a piece of boiled beef. He was, however, I believe, a truly pious man, though misled by bad examples and customs. He always continued to act towards me in a friendly manner; and, though I had not seen him for several years, he left me a small legacy at his death."

The case of an orphan niece, in ill health, gave occasion to the following judicious advice in a letter to his youngest sister.

"I would hope, and have you hope the best of her in respect of spiritual concerns; but would have *her* fear the worst. *Long experience convinces me that no mistake is more common or fatal, than too hastily encouraging persons under serious impressions to think that they have already passed a saving change, and that all is now well.* Representing salvation as invariably consequent upon a diligent, humble, persevering application to Christ, in prayer and the use of means, affords a sufficient stay to the newly awakened mind, keeps it attentive, and spurs it on to diligence. But should a person *falsely* think all right, this persuasion will sooth his conscience, slacken his diligence, and lull him to sleep. Our compas-

sion for persons under concern for their salvation often operates in this manner. But a skilful surgeon is always afraid of a hasty cure. This hint I know you will understand, and, in speaking to your niece, will take care to keep alive a jealousy of herself. I hope I do continue to pray for her, and you, and all my relations. I have much cause for gratitude for the past, and encouragement for the others; especially as I am continually getting *auxiliaries* to assist me in praying for them."

In the History of the British and Foreign Bible Society, it is remarked, "The primary occasions of all those measures out of which grew the institution of the British and Foreign Bible Society was the scarcity of Welsh Bibles in the Principality, and the impracticability of obtaining adequate supplies from the only source existing at that period, whence copies of the authorized version were to be derived." Accordingly the history commences with a correspondence, in 1787, between a clergyman in London and a brother clergyman in Wales, which first brought the existing scarcity into notice in England. This London clergyman was Mr. Scott. He was instrumental in sending several hundred Bibles into Wales, some of which were for gratuitous distribution; the remainder to be sold at cost. It was fit that *he* should lay the foundation for such a noble structure as the British and Foreign Bible Society, who was to be instrumental in elucidating the

sacred pages. *See how great a matter a little fire kindleth.* One spark of benevolence in the pious heart, properly elicited, will kindle a flame that shall warm the distant regions of the earth. It is cause for gratitude that works of benevolence are not left for a few master spirits to plan and execute. Every child of God, however obscure, has a part to perform, and a privilege to share in the charitable enterprises of the day. The following are extracts from the correspondence concerning the supply of Welsh Bibles mentioned above. The first is from Mr. Scott's correspondent in Wales; the others were written by himself.

March 24, 1787. You ask me, 'Whether a parcel of Welsh Bibles would be acceptable.' You could think of nothing more acceptable, more wanted, and useful to the country at large. I have been often, in my journeys through the different parts of the country, questioned whether I knew where a Welsh Bible could be bought for a small price; and it has hurt my mind much to be obliged to answer in the negative. There are none to be bought for money, unless some poor person, pinched by poverty, is obliged to sell his Bible to support himself and family. Mr. Williams' Bibles, with notes, are some of them unsold; but the price, 18*s*., is too high for the poor to command. If you can procure a parcel of them for our poor people, I am sure you will much rejoice the hearts of many, and do them, by the blessing of God, great good.

I will promise to dispose of them in the best manner I am able: and I think I could dispose to very good purpose, and make profitable use, of any quantity you could procure for me."

"May 15, 1787. Dear Sir, I received your acceptable letter, which made my heart rejoice, and caused me to render unfeigned thanks to God in your behalf, and the people in your neighborhood; and to pray for a still further blessing upon your labours, and those of your brethren. May the work of God both sink deeper, and spread wider, till, like the leaven, it *leaven the whole lump!* I have shewn your letter to several, and I trust it affected and influenced them in the same manner; and also in another—for *silver and gold I have none* to give; but my friends have. In consequence of what you write concerning the scarcity of Welsh Bibles, I have received twenty-five from the Society for distributing Bibles among the soldiers and sailors—and, if they approve of your disposal of them, they will send you some more. Besides this, I am collecting money to send you a hundred. I have had assistance from Mr. Thornton in this, and probably shall have more. I trust this will be an acceptable present, and a seasonable supply; and I hope many prayers will be offered up in Welsh for my friends and myself, which is the only recompense we desire, and which we shall highly value."

He mentions the Lock Asylum, then forming, and adds: "Pray for a blessing upon this, and

all other attempts of your poor brethren in London: and, though we are so distant in situation, yet, being all engaged in one warfare, under one captain, against one common enemy, we may be helpful to one another by prayers, exhortations, and encouragements. Let us, therefore, endeavor to keep up the communion of saints; and may the Lord give us wisdom, holiness, faithfulness, and usefulness, and at length receive us with, *Well done good and faithful servants!* Your affectionate brother in Christ."

June 11, 1787, he states that he has sent the one hundred and twenty-five Bibles altogether; and that the Asylum is opened.—"I am surrounded," he says, "daily with pretty much the same sort of company that my Master was, Luke xv. 1. The Lord grant that I may behave among them in some good measure as he did, and speak to them with the same success! Most people here are very unbelieving about it, and think no good can be done; but I am enabled to expect great things from the power, mercy, and love of Christ. I would *believe*, and hope to *see the glory of God* in their conversion. Indeed I do see some good fruits; and, though there are many disappointments, and I am often ready to be discouraged, yet upon the whole I think I may confidently say, good is done: and, if God help me to persevere, and neither faint in, nor grow weary of, nor act inconsistently with, my work and office, I trust I may expect a good harvest at last. We have raised money enough to

begin with, and I do not wish to have temptations to any thing interested or extravagant. At present I have refused to have any recompence for my trouble, till the experiment be tried, at least; and I hope others also, will be as disinterested as they can. I would not have any thing to depend on but God's providence and promise. We want nothing so much as the pouring out of the Holy Spirit for their conversion; and all the rest will be provided for in the Lord's time.

"You rather misapprehend my situation, in supposing that I have multiplied opportunities of preaching. For my great benefit, I am left with something about me which is very unacceptable among most of the professors of religien. Some things requisite for popularity I would not have, if I could; and others I could not have, if I would. This, together with some suspicions concerning the exactness of my orthothoxy, in the point of election, renders even those, who love me the best, shy of asking me to preach. But I feel it is needful and useful to me, and I submit to it, and am thankful for it; for my proud heart could never have borne popularity properly: indeed few do. I trust I am in some degree useful. I do the work allotted me with uprightness, though with many blunders; should be willing to do more, if called to it; and would be submissively out of employ, if the Lord appoints that for me. My heart is with you. I pray God to prosper you in your extensive sphere, and make you long *a burning and*

shining light—a useful preacher of, and a bright ornament to the gospel. Begging an interest in your prayers, I remain your affectionate friend and brother."

"February 24, 1789. If no unexpected hindrance arises, you will receive, as soon as they can be got ready and sent, another cargo of Bibles, one hundred to give away, at Mr. Thornton's expense, and the other two or three hundred to sell. I believe that the whole impression of Welsh Bibles is now nearly exhausted; and I would be thankful that the Lord has made me, almost without any thought of it, an instrument of bringing a considerable number out of the warehouses, to be disseminated where they were wanted."

October 19, 1792. A further supply of Bibles had been procured through another friend, and he says, "I trust that the Lord who hath put it into the hearts of so many in Wales to love his holy word, will also put it into the hearts of their more wealthy brethren in England to use effectual methods of supplying them with Bibles. I have no counsel to offer; but am ready to be active in the good service in any way I can. I rejoice to hear, that your people go on well, and are a comfort to you: and I think I do feel more willingness than formerly, that others should have the satisfaction of enlarged usefulness, and I the mortification of much disappointment in that respect."

Letters of a later date announce the new edi-

tion of the Welsh Bible in 1799, consisting of ten thousand Bibles, and two thousand additional copies of the New Testament; out of which he appears to have procured eight or nine hundred copies of the Bible; and the correspondence closes, May 3, 1800, with observing, "The demand has so far exceeded the impression, that each person is put off with fewer than he applied for, and thought he had secured."

CHAPTER IX.

Mr. Scott's knowledge of the Scriptures—Proposal to write and publish Notes on the Bible—Pecuniary difficulties—Progress of the work—Constituted D. D.

Mr. Scott had repeatedly and prayerfully read the Scriptures, attentively considering the application of almost every verse; and had often wished it practicable to preach through the Bible. Instruction from every part crowded upon his mind, as he daily read and meditated upon it. While thus attending to the sacred writings, a proposal was made to him to write notes on the scriptures, to be published with the sacred text in weekly numbers. He consulted several persons on the subject, and made it for some time his constant prayer to be directed aright concerning it. But he was afterwards convinced

that he did not consult, deliberate and pray so long as he ought. He was not aware of the arduousness of the work, and of the various kinds of talent and knowledge which it required, and he had but few books to consult. As he had then no pastoral charge aside from the Hospital and Asylum, his active mind found leisure for some other pursuit; and this was an employment peculiarly gratifying to his inclination. He hoped to be able to appropriate several copies as useful presents to his friends; to which object twenty-five copies were afterwards applied. He also hoped it would be some addition to his scanty income. But owing to his ignorance of the management of business, he was not aware of the expense of publishing, nor that any person would be likely to engage in publishing an expensive work, who had not sufficient pecuniary resources of his own, or who would rely entirely on the sale of the work for funds.

He commenced the publication and proceeded so far as to meet the most encouraging prospects of public acceptance, and became enthusiastically fond of the employment: but when fifteen numbers had been printed, he learned that unless money could be procured, the design must be abandoned, the money and credit of the publisher being exhausted. In these circumstances he was unwilling to have the work abandoned, or assume the responsibility of publishing it on his own account. By the help of friends, and sinking some legacies which

he received about that time, he was enabled to accomplish the undertaking. The cost of the first edition of three thousand copies, he estimated at £6000 or £7000. His publisher reckoned it at £10,000 or £11,000. The work had extended to one hundred and seventy four numbers, though it was originally fixed at one hundred and forty. But all beyond that number he printed at his own expense; and the ten last numbers he gave away, though they cost him over £200. At the close of the business he calculated the expenses, and found he had neither gained nor lost, but had performed the whole for nothing. But he soon found to his utter astonishment, that his pecuniary difficulties were only commencing, instead of coming to a close. Besides the £200 expended in the latter part of the work, he had advanced the publisher more than £800, far more than he was worth. The publisher soon after failed in business, and he received but a small dividend (1s. 2d.) on the pound, and that after a long delay. All his little property was lost at once, and he was left £500 in debt, though £200 had been given him by his friends, to help him out of his difficulties. And what was worse, he was considered incompetent to manage his secular concerns. For afterwards when he wished to purchase the residue of the edition, which was in the hands of the Trustees of the publisher, he could not obtain on a loan, £420 for that purpose, though he was confident he could have

doubled the sum by making the purchase: and considered that the loan of that sum at that time would be of more service to him than the gift of £500 a year afterwards. The whole residue, with the accompanying copperplates, was consequently sold for £450 to a person who purchased it with permission from him to reprint forty-one numbers to complete sets, on condition of his paying Mr. Scott one guinea for each number reprinted, which condition he did not fulfil. But the sale to Mr. Scott was like the execution of a dear friend. He would rather have given £1000 could he have raised it.

After multiplied disappointments and losses, he commenced a new edition, and for a considerable time went on well with it; the sales amounting to the expenditures, which were little short of £1000 annually. But an enormous rise took place in the price of paper, attended with advance in the charge of printing, which completely spoiled his rising hopes, and the sale of the whole edition scarcely cleared more than prime cost. The price of the work was fixed from the beginning, so that he gained nothing by the improvements which he made, but actually paid at the rate of £13 for every additional sheet, for the privilege of improving his work. To this edition he added the marginal references, the printing of which cost £1000. In his third edition he succeeded somewhat better; but except the sale of the copy right, he did not clear £1000 for the labor of twenty-one

years. Indeed all the labours, vexations and distress which attended this work, besides being obliged to appeal to a Court of Chancery, never will, nor can be known. But it was to answer important purposes: and great troubles generally precede great successes.

This great work was begun January 2, 1788. The first number was published March 22, following; and the last copy was finished for the press June 2, 1792. A period of four years, five months, and one day; during which the whole was twice written over by the Author's own hand. The publishing was commenced so soon after the writing that he was exceedingly hurried through the whole progress. In sickness or health his weekly task must be completed. After having with great difficulty and suffering, completed the current number, and then retired and taken an emetic, he has been called up again to furnish more copy; what he had provided being insufficient. That a work composed in such a hurried manner, should have been found to possess such intrinsic merit, and gain such acceptance, is indeed surprising; and while it furnishes an incontestible proof of the superiority of the author's mind, to this day, it carries in its front the approbation of heaven.

The first edition, completed in 1792, consisted originally of three thousand copies; but it continued to be reprinted by successive purchasers, as different parts were wanted, until it was extended to five thousand. The first edition *with*

references, commenced in 1802, and completed in 1809, consisted of two thousand. The second began in 1807, and finished in 1811, of two thousand. The third began in 1812 and completed in 1814, of three thousand. It was then stereotyped; the copy for which was fully prepared by himself to the end of 2 Timothy, iii, 2. And for the remainder he left a copy of the preceding edition corrected, though less perfectly, to the end of Revelation, from which the work has been finished, according to his directions, and in concert with his family, by a person who had been his literary assistant in pursuing the work, and in whom he placed entire confidence. Twelve thousand copies were published in England *during the author's life*, besides eight American editions, amounting to twenty-five thousand two hundred and fifty copies, and Woodward's edition of the "Reference Bible." The retail prices of all the English copies amounted to £67,600. Of the American copies £132,300, making in all £199,900 ($887,556.) At the close of 1810, Mr. Scott sold the copy-right, for which, including the copies which remained unsold, he eventually received £2,000.

The following letters from Mr. Scott's correspondence were written during the progress of the Commentary, and have reference principally to it.

"June 26, 1792. I have had my hands full, and my heart too, by ——'s means, and am not likely to be soon rescued from a variety of con-

cerns, in which my connexion with him in this publication has involved me. But he that hath hitherto helped me will, I trust, extricate me from all remaining difficulties; and it was needful that the whole progress of the work should be stamped with mortification, perplexity, and disappointment, if the Lord meant me to do any good to others by it, and to preserve me from receiving essential injury in my own soul. Four years, five months, and one day were employed in the work, with unknown sorrow and vexation: yet, if I have the best success in the sale of it, I can expect no emolument at all, except the profit on the sets I sell; whereas I may lose considerable sums. But I feel quite satisfied on that head: and, if any real good be done to a few souls by means of the whole, I am at present disposed to be thankful, even though I should lose both money, credit, and friends by means of it. I never thought I should live to conclude it; and it seems to me as a dream now I have, and I can scarcely think it a reality. Much cause for thankfulness, and much for humiliation, I see, upon the review of the whole transaction. I meant well, but I engaged hastily, and made many egregious blunders: yet I hope, through the Lord's goodness, all will end well. I do not think that my health is injured by my intense application; but my spirits are surprisingly broken: and, whereas I used to rise above difficulties, by a certain alacrity and stoutness of mind, which I took for strong faith

and much patience, I am now ready to be alarmed and dejected on every occasion; and have shed more tears since I began this work, than probably I did in all the former years of my life."

"October 23, 1792. I was worth nothing, except my furniture, when I engaged in this work, (the Commentary,) and if, after some bequests made to me, I should be in the same case when it is done with, I may, and I hope I shall say, *The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord.* I might have spent my time more unpleasantly, as well as unprofitably, than in the labor I have had; which, in some respects, has been its own reward: and, if any human being gets any real good by it, that forms an additional reason for my being satisfied and thankful: whilst the manifold evil that has connected with the whole business requires forgiveness, and excludes all idea of my being *entitled* to any reward from the Lord; and I must be very ignorant of human nature, to expect much from men for such an undertaking. I thought you would wish to know the state of my mind under what may be deemed a trial, but which does not much discompose me. I have a fair prospect of paying all their due, and that satisfies me."

"March 4, 1794. If I said that I was sorry I had written so much on the Bible, I own it was my infirmity; but I do not recollect that I ever expressed myself so strongly; though the loss of all my little property, and feeling myself

encumbered with a debt of 300*l.* or 400*l.*, without any thing to pay it except a very precarious income, did try me for a time very sharply. But I am now quite satisfied, yea, thankful; for various circumstances more and more convince me, that it will in time so acquire stability, and produce durable good effects, that I am aware mortifications by the way were needful for me. The Lord has also peculiarly favored me this year; and I have emerged at least 200*l.* from my depth of debt within about fifteen months. One friend made me a present of 100*l.* towards my loss. So I say, *As for me, I am poor and needy, but the Lord careth for me:* and I have at present no uneasiness about it."

"March 14, 1798. I am either more indolent than formerly, or I do not stand work so well. I feel a need for the petition which Mr. Whitefield often made, 'that the Lord would keep me from growing slack in the latter stages of my journey.' I every day however correct something of the Bible, besides preparing the Essays for republication, teaching, &c.; and I feel a strong desire, by some means or other, if I am spared, to have the publishing of it in my own hands, when a new edition is wanted; which will probably be ere long. I seem to think I could make great improvements: and I am more than ever convinced, that a Family Bible, which gains acceptance, is one of the most effectual vehicles of antidote against all loose views of the gospel, that can be; because it gets into the

families of persons who have any seriousness, even where public teachings lean to antinomianism; and may thus greatly counteract the effect."

"October 29, 1800. You say I am in your debt as a correspondent; and indeed I am in the way to be in every one's debt, in this respect as well as others; and here, at least, to be insolvent. I must however not only intreat, but demand, to be dealt with on other terms than many are, as I am *doing a* GREAT *work*, at least, whether a *good* one or not: and I find, as I proceed, so much wants mending, and I can so little satisfy myself, that I can hardly hope to satisfy others. I work very hard, and yet I do not get on at the rate of more than a sheet and a half in a week; and do not finish any one chapter according to the ideal completeness which I had framed in my mind. I trust the work has thus far been improved much: and I still flatter myself with the hope of getting on faster presently, and of reducing some parts into a narrower compass: but this has not hitherto been the case. The language is throughout abridged; but then new ideas are added. I do not think any of you, that make remarks on the different parts of the work, can possibly conceive what it is to keep *the whole* in view, and to finish any chapter as *a part of this whole*. Had I known and felt this formerly as I now do, I should never have dared to engage in a work, for which every day makes me more and more feel my

incompetency. Yet, as it has pleased God to give it so much of an establishment, I must now go on, and do what I can. But I must deprecate criticism, especially that of those who are disposed to judge of a chapter as of a short essay, instead of considering of what a vast whole it forms a part. I am however very glad of your observations, sent in the manner they have lately been. They very often suggest improvements beyond what you, perhaps, had in view. Your remarks on Leviticus x. made me, at least, a hard day's work: and yet I do not think you will be satisfied with what I have done. Here especially I note that you seem to have forgotten how I wrote, sick or well, in spirits or out, lively or dull: *the tale of bricks* must be delivered. I agree with you, that great points give the best occasion to practical observations; but that is when a man has the genius, and is in frame to improve them: and I often feel a sad deficiency in both respects. Indeed, my maturer judgment may correct and improve what I formerly wrote; but I verily believe I am now incapable of writing, *de novo*, so much to the purpose, and so rapidly, as I then did. I would however query, whether leading the ordinary reader from verse to verse, with useful observations, though not striking to persons of superior cultivation, may not be as beneficial in teaching him to think, and deduce instruction for himself. But enough of this."

It remained for America to confer on Mr.

Scott a mark of esteem and respect which his own country had neglected. In consequence of the good which had resulted to the interests of our glorious Redeemer's kingdom in this country, from his Commentary and other works, he was constituted Doctor of Divinity by the Dickenson College, Carlisle, Pennsylvania. Though he received it with respect and gratitude he never thought proper to avail himself of it.

CHAPTER X.

Birth of a son—Death of his wife—Letters—Church Missionary Society—Conduct on board the Margate Packet—Letters.

In giving a connected view of the transactions relative to Mr. Scott's Commentary on the scriptures, some things that occurred during the time he was employed about that work have been omitted which it will be proper to notice in another chapter.

In 1788 his youngest son was born, and in September 1790, his wife died. Her death occurred when his hands were full of employment, and his mind of overwhelming cares. He was left with four children at an age peculiarly requiring superintendance. He found it necessary, and in his circumstances, considered it proper, to form an early connexion; and in less

than a year he was married to the lady who survived him. He was peculiarly happy in both connexions.

The following letters to his wife's mother and sister, will shew the state of his mind under his bereavement.

"Chapel Street, September 9, 1790. Dear sister, I should be glad to spare you, and our poor aged mother, and my other friends in Northumberland, the pain and sorrow that this letter must occasion: but it must not be. Your dear sister is gone to heaven before us; and has left many, and me especially, and her children, selfishly to lament, that she is no longer a sinner or a sufferer, and almost to wish her back again. She was taken, about a fortnight ago, with apparently a slight indisposition in her stomach, which it was thought some trivial medicines would remove; but it proved obstinate, and at length terminated in fever and nervous delirium, and baffled every effort of the medical gentlemen who kindly attended her She died yesterday a little after seven in the evening. I see, and trust you will see, and submit to the hand of the Lord in this most painful dispensation: and I would study how to get comfort under it, and derive benefit from it. But my heart rebels against my judgment frequently; and I feel my loss to be so great, that gloom and distrust rush in. Yet the Lord can make it up to us by his own all-sufficiency. I can truly say, that, during the fifteen years and three quarters that the

Lord hath lent me this loan, I have valued it more and more daily. In every sense, she has been a blessing to me, even as a minister, as well as a Christian; and few persons have died, more generally and justly lamented by all that knew her. *But the Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away, and blessed be the name of the Lord!* I would say so from my heart: though it aches when I attempt it. The last time she had the clear use of her faculties, she expressed the fullest joy and confidence in the Lord, and assurance, that, if she died, she should go to be with Christ: and she wished me to say to all her friends, as her last advice, that they would never know happiness, till they left all other dependencies and vain pursuits, to seek salvation and comfort by faith in Christ crucified, and in communion with God through him. She was greatly rejoiced by your last letter: but she would have said a good deal to brother —— about the snares of the world, and the danger of *willing to be rich*, if he had stood by her bedside. I must leave it to you to break the melancholy subject to our mother, as you see best. My dear, unknown sister, to whom I sincerely wish all happiness for my poor wife's sake, this world, believe me, is a bubble: we shall soon be in the same situation with her: let us, then, seek the one thing needful more diligently, even that good part which shall never be taken away."

"August 5, 1791. Honored Madam, Unexpected incidents, arising from the expensive

publication in which I am concerned, have rendered it inconvenient to me to send the enclosed £10 sooner: though the delay has grieved me. I understand that you now reside with brother ———; yet there may be many little matters, tending to the comfort of your advanced age, that you may wish for, and should have in your power. Probably as the providence of God hath ordered matters, you and I may never meet in this world; but your present comfort and future felicity are and must be near my heart, for the sake of your valuable daughter,—now a saint in glory, surrounded with her three children that went thither before her, as I am fully satisfied. Whilst it pleases God to continue your life and mine, you may be assured of the same sum every year, and probably earlier next year than I have at present been able to send it; and I hope you will oblige me by receiving it without hesitation: else you will add another sorrow to the many I have experienced. If you knew all that God knows of the circumstances in which I have been placed, you could not blame, you would approve of the step I have taken, since it pleased God to take your dear daughter to himself. Situated and engaged as I was, it was literary impossible for me to proceed in any other way."

"January 23, 1793. It cannot have given any person more satisfaction than it has done me, that the Lord put it into my power to add any thing to the comfort of the aged mother of

her, who was so long my choicest earthly blessing, and whose memory must ever be dear to me. Though I have never seen her, I cannot but feel a measure of filial respect and affection for her, as well as love for you and your's: and I should rejoice at the opportunity of conversing with you, if the Lord saw good. But that is not likely in present circumstances. My desire therefore and prayer are, that we may be found amongst those, whom Jesus hath *redeemed unto God with his blood*, and may meet in heaven to spend together a joyful eternity. We are all poor sinners, in our best estate: and they who know their own hearts most, and are best acquainted with the spiritual law of God, will be most ready to make allowance for others, as well as most prepared to value the atonement, grace, and salvation of our divine Redeemer; and thus alone can we be made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. You have no reason, therefore, to write with timidity to such a poor, weak, wretched sinner as I am. The Lord hath shewn me a little of his glorious salvation, and I bear witness, in a feeble manner, to his preciousness, his power, truth, mercy, and grace: but I have no reason to assume any precedence above the feeblest of his disciples; and he alone makes me to differ from the vilest of his enemies: and must preserve that difference, if it continue—as I trust it will. I send you all the numbers to complete three copies of the Bible. I sent the third copy for my mother, at my

late dear wife's desire. If then you have sold it, the money is properly her's: and I hope you will employ it in any way for her comfort, and that you will fairly tell me, whether any more can at all alleviate her sufferings in her present state. Depend upon it, neither I nor my family shall be hurt by it. Give my dutiful love to her, and tell her that it is my fervent prayer, that the Lord would be her support, comfort, teacher, and Saviour; and that at last she may, in humble and lively faith, commend her soul, as Stephen did, into the hands of the Lord Jesus; that so we may all meet in heaven."

Notwithstanding Mr. Scott's great labour in preparing his Commentary, he found leisure for several other publications in the course of it, though it is unnecessary to notice them particularly in this place.

In 1796 and subsequently, the health of Mr. Scott's family requiring a residence by the salt water, it became necessary for him to take several passages in the packets between London and Margate. His conduct amid the motley group on board the vessel was strikingly characteristic, and produced a variety of interesting occurrences, of which but a slight account can be given. He determined to make the new scene on which he was entering an occasion of usefulness. He accordingly mixed with the multitude, observed and enquired into all that passed, and endeavored to become acquainted with the construction and management of the

vessel, and other objects worthy of notice He was ready to improve every occurrence for the benefit of himself and others. He rebuked the immoral, and opposed the skeptic and infidel. It was his aim to gain attention that he might find an avenue to every mind. He frequently argued against the corrupt principles of the day, on which occasions, by uniting vivacity with his accustomed force, he excited the attention of numbers, conveyed conviction to many of his hearers, and silenced his opponents. The discussion commonly terminated in a distribution of tracts, chiefly his own publications. This conduct on board gained the respect and affection of the sailors, and they always welcomed him as "the gentleman whom nothing could make angry." Though he would not condescend to take offence at the disrespectful language with which he was often assailed; yet he sometimes gave great offence to others by exposing their misconduct, or reproving their impiety. In one instance a London brewer finding himself defeated in his attempt to support the cause of irreligion, so far lost his temper as to "wish he had him, and a dozen more such parsons at his disposal—he would boil them in his copper." Such a gross violation of propriety, however, met with the reception it deserved from the whole company, and the brewer withdrew and was no more seen during the passage.

It is presumed that few individuals would feel themselves competent to adopt such a course in

a similar situation, yet in one who could honorably sustain it, and was induced to do so by zeal for God, and love for the souls of men, it was highly creditable.

The following extracts from Mr. Scott's correspondence will illustrate his views, his ministerial situation, and the state of his mind, during the remainder of his residence in London. The two first are to his friend in Northumberland.

"September 3, 1794. The years that you were more immediately acquainted with me, were certainly the most comfortable, in respect of religion, that I ever experienced. I, as well as you, have since made many painful discoveries about my own heart, and have had far more acquaintance with the devices of Satan than I then had: yet *hitherto the Lord hath helped;* and the grand principles, which I then inculcated, rise in my estimation every year: nor can that, which really humbles us, eventually do us harm.—My situation as a minister is replete with difficulties, and I do not see the fruits of my labours as I used to do; yet I trust I do not labour in vain.—We have a peaceable habitation: and, after all humiliating circumstances, are favoured with the intimate friendship of some of the most excellent of the earth. Nothing but sin and the effect of it could prevent our happiness: for, though I am often very poorly with the asthma, and other complaints, and my wife is far from healthy; that would not mar our comfort, if we could live a more

holy life. But happiness is reserved for heaven; and hope, with a few earnests, must suffice on earth. We are patients in an hospital; regimen, medicine, and cure are at present chiefly to be attended to; we shall shortly be discharged cured, and that will eternally make up for all. In the mean time we must continue to live by faith in our crucified Redeemer, whose blood cleanseth from all sin. And, though, like pardoned rebels, who have been lamed in rebellion, our services manifest our sinfulness; yet let us pray to be enabled to aim at adorning and recommending his gospel, and to declare his love, and the freedom of his service, to those around us, and those that shall come after us. Pray for me and mine. The Lord bless you and your's."

"February 11, 1795. Those professors who seem not to feel such conflicts, and find no such difficulty in living up to their rule, evidently aim low, and do not measure their experiences and attainments by the scriptural standard. The blessing is pronounced by our Lord on those that *hunger and thirst after righteousness;* but hunger and thirst imply the desire, the ardent desire, of what is not yet obtained; and in heaven, when such gracious desires shall be fully answered, we shall *hunger no more, and thirst no more.* In the mean time, it is well to set our mark high, that we may *press forward, forgetting the things that are behind, and reaching forth to those that are before:* and, as far as I can

judge by your letter, this is the present frame of your spirit. When we feel our need of forgiveness in this and the other respect, and of grace to fill up our station properly to the honour of the gospel, we know what to pray for, and shall pray with our hearts: but, when our convictions are more general, and we are not so particularly acquainted with our wants, enemies, and evil propensities, our prayers will be more languid; and words, good in general, but not feelingly the language of our hearts, will constitute our petitions. For my part, I am not able, after twenty years endeavouring after it, to rise a whit above a poor sinner, trusting in free mercy, through the atoning blood; and a poor beggar, who might as easily live in health without food, as serve God one day without fresh supplies of wisdom, strength, and grace, sought, in earnest prayer, from the fullness of Christ. If this be neglected, I find all good declines, all evil revives; and am sensible that nothing which has passed would keep me from the vilest crimes, of which my wicked heart is capable, if this could be wholly suspended. Yet, I trust the Lord does put; and will *put his fear into my heart, that I may not depart from him:* and my view of final perseverance is this, that the Lord has engaged to keep me (if indeed I am a believer,) empty, poor, hungering, praying, and living by faith on the fullness of Christ, till he bring me to glory: and then, all the painful experience I have had of my own weakness

and sinfulness, will tune my songs of praise to *him that washed me from my sins in his own blood*, through the countless ages of eternity. Yet God forbid that I should abuse the gospel! I trust I only desire to live that I may serve the Lord, and recommend his gospel: and perfect holiness and obedience are the heaven I hope and long for. But the more I do in the Lord's service, the greater debtor I am to his grace, for the will, power, pardon, and acceptance: and the more I aim to do, the deeper sense I have of my need of the blood and righteousness of Christ, as my only title to the heavenly inheritance.

"Perhaps this account of my feelings may show you, that your case is not singular; and I feel myself peculiarly interested in your concerns and that of your relatives; to whom with your minister, pray give my kind remembrance. I feel the same difficulties also about my children, of which you speak: but I endeavour to use means and to commit them to the Lord, and thus to cast my care on Him. Yet even here I need forgiveness; and am conscious that neither my example, prayers, nor instructions, are what they should be. Thus *boasting is excluded.* I have no claim for myself or them, nor any plea, but God's mercy, and the encouraging promises of his word; which, though general, give hope. And thus I proceed, and leave the matter with him.—Mr. Newton is tolerably well, perhaps the happiest man to be

met with. But he grows old, and seems in all respects to break. I hope I shall not forget to pray for you: I beg the prayers of you all, for I much need them. I remain, most sincerely, your affectionate friend, and well-wisher."

The following advice to his son at college will be found interesting to students who are anxious of being useful as well as learned.

"November 2, 1795. You have hitherto been kept greatly out of the way of worldly associates, and assure yourself you have lost nothing by it; for the more they are known, the clearer must be the conviction to every reflecting mind, that they can be of no advantage to a man, in any sense, without a tenfold greater disadvantage. Endeavour, therefore to cultivate a courteous, kind, and cheerful disposition and behaviour towards all sorts of persons; avoiding moroseness, affectation, and singularity, in things indifferent; but admit no one to your familiarity, who does not seem to you, and to more experienced judges, to have the fear and love of God in his heart. Conciliate by an amiable deportment such as are strangers to the ways of religion, in order to allure them up to your ground; but take not a single step down upon their ground: lest, instead of your drawing them out of the mire, they draw you in. If you act consistently and prudently, and by a moderate attention to your studies, in subserviency to the one thing needful, and to future usefulness, secure a reputable

standing in the college; the careless or vicious may affect to despise you, but in their hearts they will respect you. I say a *moderate* application; for I apprehend that very great exertions are not only injurious to the health and spirits; tend to form a man to habits that are unpleasant, or to a kind of oddity; and exceedingly interfere with the growth of grace and every holy affection in the soul; but they counteract their own end; blunt and overstretch the mental powers; and, after surprising progress for a time, incapacitate a person for making any progress at all. Ambition of distinction, more than love of knowledge, is the spur to this too eager course: but neither one nor the other should be your *primum mobile;* but a desire to acquire that competency of useful knowledge, which may fit you for glorifying God, and serving your generation. This will also teach you to take care of your health and spirits; to accustom yourself to corporeal as well as mental exertion; (the want of which is severely felt by most of our ministers who are academical men;) to cultivate that kind of behaviour, which may render you as acceptable as truth and conscientiousness will let a man be in this world—the want of which is one of my principal disadvantages; and so travel on at a sober rate, without over-pushing the horse at beginning of the journey. Excessive eagerness in any particular study has also this disadvantage, that it is apt to render a man rather

learned than *wise*, or even *knowing;* as over-eating renders a man full, but does not nourish him. They who read too much, do not digest; they learn what others say, but they do not make it their own by reflection, or *distinguish between the precious and the vile.* But moderate study, with frequent pauses for reflection, useful conversation, and exercise, adds more to real knowledge, and leaves time to apply it to practical uses. You certainly should not waste time; but stinting yourself to so much of this, or the other every day may cramp you; render your mind uncomfortable; and unfit you for the exercises of religion—without which nothing else will really prosper—I would advise you to write your own thoughts on subjects frequently; and try to get the habit of doing it in Latin: it may be of use to you, some time, beyond what you now perceive. But whatever you read or write, compare all with the Bible: study divinity as a Christian, and as one intended to be a minister; and other things only in subordination to it: for this is your *general*, and your *particular* calling too. I pray the Lord to be your Guard, Guide, Father and Comforter!"

"February 13, 1796. I think you are very right in cultivating general knowledge. I trust, however, you will not neglect the peculiar studies of the place, so as not to appear with credit on proper occasions. The object in all your studies should be, neither celebrity, advantage, nor knowledge, for its own sake; but furniture

to enable you to serve God and your generation; and as much credit as may give weight to your endeavors of that kind. Any friend that has cultivated general knowledge successfully, will give you hints on the best method of doing it; and *gleaning* seems to me an important matter. Learn from every body: be selfish in this respect: get all you can, not only from superior men, but from the most inferior. But be sure you compare all your real or supposed knowledge with the word of God. If real, it will elucidate, and be elucidated by it: if not, it will be detected and exposed by the touchstone. At some time or other, I would advise you to study well the evidences of revelation; not merely in a general way, but so as to be master of the subject. Perhaps it may be soon enough at present: but it is a matter of great importance in this age especially. Above all, cultivate personal religion. Let nothing be an excuse to your mind for being slight in that matter. Even useful labors for the good of others may be separated from diligence in the concerns of our own souls: but it is this which must bring a blessing on all else, and cause it to proceed with life and vigor."

The following account of the methods adopted by one who had so successfully studied divine truth, will doubtless be interesting to the reader.

"December 10, 1795. I know not what further directions to give you respecting the manner of inquiring after truth, and seeking to have it more deeply impressed on the heart, and, as

it were, wrought into the judgment and affections, than are already in print. I find it exceedingly difficult to keep my attention fixed, or to get my heart suitably affected, in reading and meditating upon truths, which have become obvious and familiar by daily study: but there are times when I find, that, while I try to muse on the subject, *a fire*, as it were, *kindles*, and contemplation terminates in adoring gratitude and admiring love. In general, I think, I have found it advantageous sometimes to read the scriptures with such exactness, as to weigh every expression, and its connexions, as if I were about to preach on every verse; and then to apply the result to my own case, character, experience, and conduct, as if it had been directly addressed to me—not as a new promise or revelation, but as a message containing warning, caution, reproof, exhortation, encouragement or direction, according to my previous or present state of mind, and my peculiar circumstances. In short, to make the passages into a kind of sermons, as if about to preach to others, and then to turn the whole application on myself, as far as suited to my case; as if another, who fully knew me, had been addressing me. At other times I have read a passage more generally, and then selected two or three of the most important observations from it, and endeavored to employ my mind in meditation on them, and to consider how they bore on the state of my heart, or on my past life, or on those things

which I heard or observed in the world or the church; and to compare them with the variety of sentiment, experiences, conduct, or prominent characters, with which we become gradually more and more acquainted. Thus I have endeavored to read the scriptures, and to use them as a touchstone to distinguish *the precious from the vile*, both at home and abroad. At other times, having perhaps heard or read the opinions of different men on any disputed subject, I have, in my daily reading of the scriptures, constantly kept those opinions in view, that I might at length form my judgment on which side truth lay. In doing this, I have always aimed to keep my mind from the two extremes, on the one hand, of giving up my own opinion, from a kind of false humility, and deference for men, without being previously convinced that I had been mistaken; and, on the other hand, of assuming my opinion to be truth, so as to exclude light, especially if it came from an enemy, or a person not entitled to much deference. So that I have always aimed to be open to conviction; to bring every man's probable opinion to the touchstone, and to give it a fair trial, if not tried before; but not to receive it, without plainly perceiving its agreement with the scripture, and at the same time to aim, that my heart might be suitably affected with the conclusions of my understanding—in which I have principally failed. But, a spirit of continual prayer, mixed with reading, has been my principal help in all

these things; without which either self-wisdom or indolent dependence on human teaching will surely prevail."

The following is to his eldest sister on the sickness of her daughter.

"April 20, 1797. It is a duty to use such means as we can to preserve life, and restore health: yet we all know that many other things must be consulted. Physicians often recommend such means, as their patients are unable to try: and, when this is the case, there is no ground of anxiety or regret; for the ability, the means, and the blessing, are all in the hand of God. It is often a comfort to me, both in respect of myself and those dear to me, that the Saviour who was *wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities*, has *the keys of death and of the eternal world.* If we can but say, *Lord, he whom thou lovest is sick*, we may confidently commit the event to him. It may be very different for a time, (as in the case of Lazarus,) from what we should choose, but, in the final issue, it will demonstrate his wisdom, as well as his faithfulness and love. The number of our trials, and pains, and days; the circumstances of our life and death; are all with him. He can be touched with the feeling of our sorrows, and consults *our* feelings as far as wisdom will permit. But *faithful are the wounds of a friend:* and he prefers our durable and eternal good, even to our present comfort: though he *will not leave his disciples comfortless*, or *orphans*,

or *bereaved* persons. But *what he doeth we know not now*; *hereafter we shall know.* We do not even know the effect of trials on our own souls: we cannot say what we should have been without them: we cannot estimate or measure our own progress or growth. The Lord's plan is very complex: but the truth is sure. *All things work together for good to them that love God, whom he hath called according to his purpose.* I have no doubt of the event to you, that it will be mercy:

> The cloud you so much dread,
> Is big with mercy, and will break
> In blessings on your head.

But nature must feel, and I do most heartily pray God to spare your feelings, and to preserve your child, to be both a comfort to you, and a blessing to others. But I am not confident that he will see good to answer these prayers, because they are, perhaps, the language of ignorance or mistake. All I see, hear, or feel, convinces me, that nothing is worth living for, but to prepare for death and heaven, and to do some good in the world. If therefore the Lord has given her grace to choose the good part, to flee for refuge to Christ, and to yield herself to him in penitent faith and love; if He has any work for her to do in the world, she will certainly live to do it; and, if not, departing hence to be with Christ will be a loss to others, but her richest gain."

To his son on his own recovery from sickness.

"During almost sixteen years' continuance in London, though often greatly indisposed, I have never once before been prevented officiating on the Sunday: but I have now done nothing since Wednesday sennight in the evening. I have not been able even to pray in the family till last night, and then with great difficulty. In the former part of life, I had many more violent and long continued fevers: but I have not been so ill, since I had a nervous fever in Shropshire, in 1783; and, as far as I can recollect, I never had so violent an attack of the asthma before. For many hours of two successive nights, it was all but absolute suffocation; and the sense and dread of that were continually present to my mind. Yet, bless the Lord, I was not left either to murmur or despond. I had very serious apprehensions of immediate death; though I said nothing to those around me: and all my cares, plans, hopes, (as to this world,) and every thing, except my wife and children, seemed quite out of sight. I had not any *sensible* comfort; yet I thought of dying, without emotion: though the idea of dying by suffocation seemed formidable. I felt the grand concern to be safe; and was willing to leave all below, to have done with suffering, sin, and temptation. I did not feel much of what the apostle mentions, of DESIRING *to be with Christ;* and I was convinced, for that very reason, that my Christianity was of a small growth: yet I trusted that it was genuine. I

tried to commit all I loved, and all I had labored to effect, into the Lord's hands: and I thought of recovering, as a sailor, just about to enter harbour, would of being ordered out to sea again. Yet I was willing, if the Lord saw good. This was about the state of my mind. I could confusedly recollect very many things to be humbled for, and ashamed of; but nothing that impeached the sincerity of my professed faith in Christ, and love to him: and, though conscious of very many faults and imperfections in my ministry, I was also conscious, that I had honestly sought to glorify God, and save souls, in preference to all wordly interests. My hope was that of a sinner, throughout saved by grace: yet I was satisfied, that the aim of my heart, and the tenor of my conduct, since I professed the gospel, evidenced that I had built on the sole foundation by a *living* faith. When I die, it is not to be expected, that I should be able to declare my views and experiences; and therefore I commit these things to paper, as what passed in my mind, when I had serious apprehensions of dying.

"It pleased God, however, at length to bless the means, and repeated emetics, blisters, &c. abated the paroxysm: yet the lungs were left in such a state, and I had so strong a fever, that, for almost ten days, I tasted neither animal food, nor fermented liquor, except a spoonful of wine two or three times, by way of trial, which always disagreed with me. So that, altogether,

I have been reduced very low: but, thank God, the fever yielded to medicine; and I have now nothing remaining of my disorder, but the languor, and a sort of irritable state of the lungs, which chiefly troubles me by preventing me from sleeping. In other respects I am amazingly recovered, and relish my food better than I have done for months past. I am, however, advancing in years; and this attack will probably have some effect upon my plans, so far as to make me backward to undertake all that labor, which I had some thoughts of. But wherever, or how long, or in whatever way, I may be employed, I never felt so deeply convinced in my life, that *being employed*, as a minister, is the only thing worth living for. The vanity of all worldly possessions, distinctions, connexions, and enjoyments, never so forcibly impressed my mind, as on this occasion. The folly of shrinking from that hardship or suffering which the frown or scorn of men can inflict on us, for faithfulness, appeared extreme; when I felt how easily God could inflict far sharper sufferings, if he saw good. The reality and importance of eternal things shone on the scenes around me; so that the crowds of noble and affluent sinners, following the steps of the rich man in the gospel, appeared the most miserable of wretches. Transient pain taught me emphatically the value of deliverance from *eternal* misery; and endeared the love of the deliverer, who voluntarily endured such pain and agony for us vile sinners.

The evil of sin, the happiness of the poorest true Christian, and the little consequence of the smoothness or ruggedness of the path, provided we come to heaven at last: these things, and others connected with them, have not, for many years at least, so impressed my mind. The Friday evening before I was taken ill, I preached on the text, *Follow holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.* But I did not properly dwell on the Lord's method of making us *partakers of his holiness:* so he has since preached to me on the subject. And, as I now think little of the pain and distress attending the remedies used for my body, (the pain is all past,) because I hope I shall have the subsequent benefit of better health; how little should I think of the sharpest sufferings I can here go through, if the health of my soul be forwarded, and, at length, perfected, by means of them: or rather how ought I to bless and thank God for them all. Pray for me, that I may not lose these impressions; but, if spared, may live, and preach and pray, and write, in a manner, somewhat less unsuitable to the vastly important services I am engaged in: for *who can be sufficient for these things?*—I rejoiced, and blessed God, when I recollected that he had put you into this high office of the ministry. O may he preserve you from the snares, and smiles, and frowns of the world; from the fascinations and delusions, from the lukewarmness, and evangelical formality, and attachment to secular interests, which are

sanctioned too much in the church! May you be a wiser, holier, more faithful, and more useful minister, than ever I have been!—O keep the concluding scene in view every step of the way; and judge of every thing by it. The evils I have protested against in health appeared to me far, far more pernicious, as I lay gasping for breath, than before: and I seem to rejoice in the hope of entering further protests against them. But I must stop my pen, or I shall hurt myself. You will excuse the overflowings of my heast at this time: it never was more full of love for you. My love and blessing to *my daughter*. God bless and prosper you in the best sense!—Your truly affectionate father."

From the period of the illness here described, Mr. Scott relinquished his Sabbath morning lecture at Lothbury, having performed that service more than ten years.

CHAPTER XI.

Removal to Aston Sandford—Account of a poor woman—His review of his conduct at the Lock—several visits—Tuition of Missionaries—Study of Arabic—Residence at Aston—Letters.

Mr. Scott had never felt satisfied with his situation at the Lock; but saw no proper opening for him elsewhere. Indeed his way seemed to be so hedged, that he could not help himself. At length circumstances were such as to afford him an opportunity to leave the station; but to relate them circumstantially would be uninteresting and tedious He, however, procured a living at Aston Sandford, into which he was instituted July 22, 1801, but did not remove thither until the Spring of 1803. As there was no parsonage house at Aston, he was under the necessity of building one. In this he was providentially assisted by an unexpected legacy. The circumstances attending, may perhaps be interesting to those who love to observe the operations of divine Providence.

Some years before, Mr. Scott, in the exercise of his parochial functions, became acquainted with a pious female servant who had been reduced to poverty by an incurable disease. He learned that while in health she had expended all her savings to support her aged and infirm parents, confiding in God to provide means for her own support, in case she should live to be

unable to support herself. She had now no resort but a London work house, where the society must be peculiarly disagreeable to a pious mind. Mr. Scott felt extremely unwilling to have her placed in so unhappy a situation. Having been entrusted by some affluent friends, with money for charitable purposes, he proposed to support her for a time until further medical aid could be tried. Providence saw fit to withhold his blessing from the charitable exertions, and the case of the poor woman was deemed hopeless. Should her kind friend then forsake her, or should he deprive his children of bread to support a poor stranger, when the public were under obligations to do it? "*Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me,*" were words which he had too often read; and the example of the Friend of sinners, he had too often set before others, to shrink from a benevolent action. He took the poor diseased creature into his house. Some families with whom she had lived and been respected, willingly contributed towards her support. From one of them he received an annual stipend of £10, and was enabled to support her without any improper expense to himself. It was expected when he took her that she would live but a short time, but she recovered in a measure, and though a cripple, outlived her kind benefactor. About the time that Mr. Scott was preparing to leave London by building a house at Aston, for which his means were incom-

petent, one of the family from whom he had received the annual stipend, and to whom he was known only by means of the poor woman, died and left him a legacy of £200. Afterwards another of the family died and left him £40, and the stipend was continued for several years. For more than thirty-five years, Mr. Scott enjoyed the privilege of supporting at a very small expense, and of saving from very great distress one of Christ's poor members. Such was her consistency of conduct, her uniform cheerfulness, and the fervency of her prayer, that notwithstanding her sickly condition, her presence was considered a privilege by the servants in the family, and even by those who received her under their roof. A striking instance of the faithfulness of God to those who trust his Providence, while they obey his commands. This poor woman was an eminent instance of filial piety, and her reward in this life was a residence of more than thirty-five years in a pious and happy family, where she wanted no good thing. Mr. Scott's endeavor to do good to one of Christ's disciples was received as done to himself. And in addition to its being no loss in a temporal view, himself and family enjoyed the benefit of her prayers, and blessings for her sake, for a long course of years. For if we study the scriptures, and observe mankind, we shall often find pious persons are instrumental of great good to the families with whom they reside. (Gen. xxx. 27, and xxxix. 5.)

Mr. Scott left the Lock with the consciousnass of having been instrumental of good both to the hospital and Asylum, in their secular and spiritual concerns, though he received much blame and censure for the measures he pursued. His own language was, "I can rejoice in the testimony of my conscience that I uniformly did my best, often amidst many censures, and against much opposition, to promote the secular interests of the charities, as far as was consistent with the great object of both of them and the chapel—bringing sinners to repentance and salvation; and that I never suffered my own gratification, ease, interest, or credit, to warp me from that line of conduct which I deemed incumbent on me; and that, at least, I was enabled to defeat very many attempts, the success of which it was afterwards allowed, would have been highly detrimental."

It was Mr. Scott's care, like that of the great Apostle to the Gentiles, to *keep a conscience void of offence toward God and man.* Conscious integrity will support a man against a host of adversaries. Our motives should not only be upright and our conduct unimpeachable, but they should *appear* to be so. The gospel requires us to avoid *all appearance of evil; not to let our good be evil spoken of.* The Christian has, in a sense, the honor of his Lord in keeping. His name is identified with that of his Saviour, and it is his business to guard it with scrupulous care. He has no right to disregard the opinions of the

wise and good, nor to make himself the *song of the drunkard* and the sport of the vain.

The village of Aston was one of the smallest in the kingdom, consisting only of two farm-houses, and a few laborer's cottages, besides the new parsonage, without either ale-house, shop or mechanic of any kind; including young and old, about seventy persons. Here Mr. Scott found a peaceful retreat. His people were constant at church, and his parochial duties requiring but a small part of his time, he was able to pursue his literary avocations. He also found leisure to journey, and among other places visited Hull, York, Leeds, Bristol, Portsmouth and Cambridge.

Mr. Scott's benevolence and Missionary zeal have been noticed. Though advancing in life, his warm affection for the Redeemer's kingdom did not subside, and at the age of sixty he commenced the instruction of missionaries for the service of the Church Missionary Society. The majority of his pupils were Germans, and were all sent out as foreign missionaries. They ever expressed the strongest affection and gratitude for his assiduous and paternal attention to them.

In 1808 he commenced the study of the Susoo and Arabic languages, and made such progress as to be able to teach them to his pupils. Those who are acquainted with the feelings of men in general when arrived at sixty years of age, and with their capacity for new acquisitions, will best appreciate the energy and resolution dis-

played in his thus calmly encountering and conquering at this time of life, with all his other engagements, and all his infirmities, the formidable difficulties of the Arabic language. The Hebrew likewise, which was his auxiliary on this occasion, had been entirely resumed, and almost learned, since his fifty-third year.

In this employment he continued from 1807 to 1814, when a permanent seminary was established by the Society. Long continuance in a sedentary posture was painful to him, but he was unwilling to relinquish the business, until a permanent institution was provided, which rendered his services less necessary. Benevolence seemed inherent in his nature. Indeed it was impossible that one who had prayed so long and so earnestly for the extension of Christ's kingdom among men, should witness the christian world awaking from the slumber of ages, and beginning to put forth its powers in a manner more becoming the character of the religion which it professes, without heartfelt gratitude and joy; or without exerting himself, by every means in his power, to cherish the rising spirit.

Immediately on his becoming a resident at Aston he determined to make an annual collection in his congregation for the Church Missionary Society. Though it was thought by some to be a visionary project for so small a village, he resolved to make the attempt, and persevere in it, convinced that by exciting an interest in behalf of the salvation of others,

Christian ministers most materially promote the success of their labour among their own people. His first collection exceeded £17. The third exceeded £24. The sixth £31. This was a remarkable result, considering the obscurity of the parish, and should stimulate our New England parishes to renewed exertions for the spread of the gospel.

His regard to the British and Foreign Bible Society has been noticed. Several of his latest excursions were made to assist at the meetings of its auxiliaries. At one of these meetings he closed his address with the following sentences.

"I conclude as I began: 'Precious Bible, what a treasure!' *the light of our feet, and the lanthorn of our paths:* our guide in youth, our comfort in old age, our antidote against the fear of death. The longer I live, the more I feel for those who have not the word of God. I am growing old, and feel the infirmities of age. I know I must soon die. I am a sinner against God: I must appear before him in judgment: I must exist forever, in happiness or misery: but I can find no light, no hope, no comfort, except from the Bible. What *should* I do without the Bible, and that Saviour whom the Bible reveals to me? While, then, the Bible is our own invaluable treasure, the source of all our knowledge, hope, and comfort, let us do what we can to communicate the precious treasure to others also, all over the world. We can do but little individually, it is true; yet great multitudes,

cordially uniting, may effect much. Time was, since I can remember, when, if I had possessed the means in other respects, I should hardly have known how to *reach out* the blessing, beyond my own contracted circle. But this society, and others of a similar nature, so to speak, *lengthen my arms;* and, by concurring heartily in the designs of those who conduct them, we may stretch out our hands to the inhabitants of the east and of the west—of Africa, of Asia, of America, as well as of Europe; and give to them *the light of life.* Let us then *do what we can,* while here; and so *wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.*"

Mr. Scott found his residence at Aston much more agreeable than any he had found after leaving Ravenstone. Like all other affectionate faithful ministers he had to mourn over careless impenitent sinners, who still held out against all his admonitions and prayers. Yet by the earnest and active character of his piety and benevolence, he excited an interest in the surrounding neighborhood, in favor of improvement: schools were established, and charitable institutions were formed, where previously such things had not been thought of. To stir up christians, to improve their talents, was a prominent object of his instruction; and while he set them so eminent an example of the duty inculcated, his labour was not, and could not be, in vain in the Lord.

The following letters, the first to his corres-

pondent in Northumberland, and the other to the widow of his friend and patron, will give a view of his character as a counsellor and friend.

"November 20, 1808. Dear Mrs. R——, If I had not a most clear and full excuse, my conduct in not writing to you would be exceedingly blamable: but I am so engaged with my publications, with letters of business thus rendered unavoidable, with instructing missionaries placed under my care, and with my ministerial employments; that I am compelled to decline all correspondence which is not absolutely necessary. It must also be remembered that I am growing old, (almost sixty-two,) and never was very healthy: and I can assure you that I am weary every night at bed-time, as much as any poor labourer. Yet, bless God, my health is not much worse than when you were with me, bating infirmities of old age: and I go on preaching as often, as long, and as loud, perhaps, as formerly, and with great encouragement in this obscure place.

"I wish I was like St. Paul who could say, *always in every prayer of mine for you all, making request with joy:* but I hope I do not quite forget you and your's. I feel gratified by your letter; it calls to my mind, what always refreshes it, the scenes which took place when you were with us: and I hope and trust that he who, (as I then most confidently believed, and still do,) *began a good work in you, will perform it till the day of Christ.* I am rejoiced to hear that any of your

children are walking in the Lord's ways: and I would encourage your hope of the others. Only give them good instructions; exercise parental authority with firmness, as well as kindness, by reproofs and corrections when necessary, &c.; set before them sedulously an edifying example; and pray for them continually and fervently; then wait, and hope, and acquiesce in the will of God; and even those who now seem less promising will perhaps become your comfort. What you mention of your sister, is also very pleasant to me; and, were it practicable, I should be glad to see and converse with you both, but I suppose we shall not meet, till we meet, as I hope, in heaven.

"I would not, however, discourage your writing. I am drawing near the close of my work, on which I have spent ten years; and after that, I may be more at liberty to answer your letters. At present I must conclude. Mrs. S. and my daughter are well, (or as well as usual,) and unite in respects and good wishes. May the Almighty God, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, shower down all blessings, especially spiritual blessings, abundantly on you, your husband, your children, your *brother*, &c.: this is the sincere prayer of your faithful friend and servant in Christ."

"October 8, 1809. My dear madam, The event made known to me by Mr. R——'s letter, though melancholy, was by no means unexpected. In general, I am reluctant to intrude on

mourners during the first paroxysms of grief: but I feel such a special interest in you, and all your concerns, that I cannot delay to express how sincerely I sympathize with you. I know you *must* grieve, both for your own heavy loss, and for that of your dear children, and of many others. I would only wish to drop a hint or two towards alleviating and regulating your sorrows, that you may *not grieve, as one without hope*, for him who, I trust, *sleeps in Jesus*. While the excellency of the husband and father, of whom you and your children have been bereaved, enhances the greatness of your loss, it infuses the sweetest ingredients into the bitter cup. You have no call to lament, as David over wicked Absalom, and many a parent, or wife, or child, over one, concerning whom there is *no hope*, or scarcely any, as to the infinite concerns of eternity. You have ground for rejoicing amidst your tears: your loss is the immense gain of him, whom you most love: and surely, would a wish or prayer do it, you would not bring him back into this sorrowful world—especially in the afflicted state, in which he had long continued. You will meet again to part no more: and many blessings are in store for you and your's, in answer to the prayers he had long offered for you.

"Your dearest earthly friend is taken away: but *the Lord liveth* from everlasting to everlasting. The event, which you must deplore, (nature dictates, and reason and revelation sanction your doing so,) is, beyond all doubt, the result

of wise love to you, as certainly as Joseph's being sold into Egypt was the result of wise love to Jacob and his family. *What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter.* I am of opinion that, if the greatest sufferer, among those who have been eventually saved, could have known all the good effects of his sufferings, to himself and others, and the glory redounding to God by means of them; he would have willingly and thankfully received his bitterest cup; even as Jesus, *for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross.* I can conceive of Bartimeus, in heaven, blessing God for his blindness; Martha and Mary, for the death of Lazarus; Lazarus, for being called to pass through death twice; and why should you not have to bless God for this present painful dispensation? *We know that all things work together for good to them that love God.* Your good sense, and your acquaintance with the scriptures, cannot fail of suggesting to you, that *indulging grief*, however admired in the world, is in itself, as wrong as indulging anger, or any other passion. You cannot but grieve enough, without *feeding* what should be counteracted. *While the child lived, I fasted and wept*, &c. 2 Samuel xii, 19—23. The will of God is *now known:* though painful, you must feel it right to submit, and to say, *The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord:* and, however great the loss, the all-sufficient God can make it up.

"I am far from regretting, or thinking it an

addition to your sorrow, that you are left with seven children. Under God, they will be an alleviation of it. *Leave thy fatherless children with me, I will preserve them alive; and let thy widows trust in me.* My dear friend, a most important duty, now more important than ever, devolves upon you; I am fully persuaded, from your past conduct, a duty delightful to you in itself. Now, indeed, for a time the delight will be mingled with tears; but the importance of the duty is proportionably increased; and I cannot doubt, that the sorrow will decrease, and the joy increase, as you proceed. For the sake of your dear children, in addition to higher motives, watch and pray against excessive sorrow, and against any expressions of it by solitude, or omitting the proper care of your health and spirits; which might unfit you for your charge. Think thus: 'The whole now devolves on me: let me not yield to heartless despondency. The souls of my children, and children's children, and the welfare of numbers by their means are now at stake.'

"Perhaps I have entered too much into detail: but I write as to one of my own children; and you will excuse me. I trust many here are praying for you and your's. I cannot but hope, that there are far more than a hundred souls, perhaps two or three hundred, that will bless God for ever, that the living of Aston ever came into your family. I hope many pray heartily to God for support, and comfort, and every bles-

sing on you and your's. May the God and Father of our Lord Jesus be your support and comforter, and bless you and your children!—Your's sincerely."

CHAPTER XII.

Pecuniary embarrassments—Extraordinary relief—His faith—Answer to Rabbi Crooll—Extracts from his correspondence—Death of Princess Charlotte.

When Mr. Scott sold the copy-right, and the remaining copies of his Commentary, it was in the full expectation that it would enable him to pay the debts he had incurred, and disencumber him of the embarrassments under which he had so long labored. Writing to a friend he says, "I have been struggling hard for many years, and have now brought matters to that state that I can dispose of the whole. What I am to receive, with what my book-seller will owe me, will nearly cover all my debts; and it is high time that, on the one hand, my borrowed money should be paid; and, on the other that I should disembarrass myself of worldly cares, and set my house in order, that I may be ready when my summons comes." Though some delays and disappointments took place, he continued to entertain this expectation, and even to hope he

should be found possessed of some moderate portion of property till near the close of 1813. But at that period, on closing his accounts with the bookseller and others, he found to his utter astonishment, and with a greater degree of disquietude, perhaps, than he had ever before felt on such a subject, that he was still deficient more than £1200 which he had little else to defray than printed paper, which appeared to be almost unsaleable. This was principally owing to great quantities of his books, especially the Theological works in five volumes, being discovered in the printer's warehouses, and brought to account, which were before considered as sold. Eight hundred and six volumes were thus brought forward in one article. This was a grievous disappointment, presenting him with apparently useless paper, instead of ready money; and in a great measure, frustrated his hopes for the future. He had calculated that his minor works were selling to the amount of £250 or £300 annually; but it now appeared that the sale was not exceeding £100, which made considerable difference in his prospects. No wonder the discovery exceedingly disconcerted and distressed him, aged and infirm as he was. But it was of no use to sit in despondency; some plan must be adopted, to extricate himself, and he proposed to sell his Theological Works at a reduced price. He issued a circular among his friends, stating his situation, and requesting their co-operation in finding purchasers.

The first person, a Clergyman of Cambridge to whom he made known his difficulties and his proposed means for extricating himself, returned the following answer. "My Dear Friend, Never was a more delightful office committed to me, than that which I have to execute at this time. Your visit to Cambridge was a blessing to many who are anxious to testify towards you their respect and love, and who earnestly request your acceptance of a few hundred pounds, which they have desired me to remit to you in their name, and in the name of some others who have been benefitted by your writings. Greatly rejoicing in an event so expressive of their love to Christ, and the veneration they feel for your character, I am affectionately yours,

C. Simeon."

The remittance comprised £590 as a present, besides a considerable sum for books. Many other persons in different places testified their respect for Mr. Scott by their munificence. Jan. 17, 1814, Mr. Scott wrote, "I have received in all from different quarters and from those of whom I had never heard the name, quite enough to pay all my debts; and as I have reason to think that most, if not all the works will be disposed of, *I now have all and abound*, except that I want more thankfulness to God and man. I have even declined some offers made me. I hope mine will be considered an *adjudged case*, to encourage faith in God's providence, in those who are employed in his work."

Again, to his eldest son, Feb. 14, 1814. "I really expected, at first, little more than to dispose of two or three hundred copies of the work, and I never intimated a desire of further help than in that way. You have heard what I received from Mr. S. Since then money has been sent me, with the most cordial respectful letters from persons of whom I never heard; among the rest, £20 from a quaker. Offers were made of raising more if I desired it, but I declined. I do not owe any thing which I cannot pay on demand—what I never could say since you were born, and I have something in hand, and shall receive more besides the works. O that this might make me ashamed of all my distrust and dejection: and that it may encourage you and others, to go on in the work of the Lord, without anxiety on this ground. Serve him by *the day*, and trust him *by the day*. Never flinch a service because nothing is paid for it, and when you want it in reality, you or yours, he will pay it." And again, Feb. 25, 1814. "I have received at least £2000 as presents in little more than two months, besides the sale of books. You see how easily God can provide. *Trust in the Lord and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.*"

Ever after Mr. Scott embraced the gospel, he lived by faith in Jesus Christ, not only trusting him for the salvation of his soul, but for his daily bread. His faith was often severely tried. Yet upheld by the arm of divine grace, he endured

the trial, and reaped both a temporal and spiritual reward. Yet he was by nature a child of wrath, even as others. St. Paul was originally no more; yet he *learned in whatever state he was, therewith to be content.* He had learned that he was a sinner, and that the blessings he received were of grace. Christians profess to follow their divine Master, and to be, in a measure, made like him. But as a man, he had not a place of his own where he might lay his head. Christians who are poor in this world's goods, should recollect who hath ordered the circumstances of their lives, even that it is He, who bled and died for them, and that he knows what is best for them. There is more real satisfaction in trusting in God for our daily bread, than the rich worldling can imagine. The Christian is assured that so long as he trusts in God, he will never leave nor forsake him. To the afflicted and perplexed it is no small consolation that God is purifying them for himself; whether it be by poverty, sickness or any other distress. "God will provide," should ever be the christian's motto.

The remainder of Mr. Scott's life affords less incidents than his earlier years. Confined, generally, within the bounds of his parish, by the infirmities of age, and a cancerous affection, we must look principally to the temper of his mind, and the diligence with which he continued his labours in his Master's service. He was still considered one of the ablest defenders of the

truth; and in 1813, the Committee of the Society for promoting Christianity among the Jews, sent him a copy of Rabbi Crooll's "Restoration of Israel," with a request that he would answer it, which he accomplished in 1814. He wrote on the subject, "I am deeply engaged in the Controversy between Jews and Christians, and in answering a book by R. Crool, Hebrew Teacher at Cambridge. It is my object to draw forth the Jews from their lurking holes, to fair argument, and I mean to discuss every important question concerning the Messiah of the Old Testament, on the ground of the old Testament only."

The following extracts of letters will shew what were his further occupations at this time.

March 13, 1815. I have sent to the Christian Observer a sheet of translations from Calvin on the uses of the moral law. I think extracts from Calvin might be rendered very useful, if circulated at this time. But my main occupation is the Index to the Bible. The Partners are so urgent for me to expedite it, that I am forced to give up or postpone my plan of revision and improvement of the Commentary, which I was carrying on, in, I trust, a useful manner. I spend half or more of my working time, (which is nearly all except sleeping time) about it. I find it a difficult and cumbrous business.

The following hints on the subject of temptations arising chiefly from the deep and mysterious dealings of God with the human race; and

likewise on that of anxiety concerning the spiritual interest and future state of our children, will not be uninteresting to those who have experienced the feelings to which he refers.

March 4, 1816. "I have of late received so many letters of painful intelligence, that they have almost been to me like the messengers who followed one another with evil tidings to Job; though, I bless God, far from so distressing; yet in my shattered frame and spirits, rather more than I could well support."

"I have for many years, when assailed by harrassing mental temptations, taken occasion from them, to leave, as it were, my own personal concerns, and to enlarge especially, after, or even during their prevalence in supplication for the extention of the kingdom of Christ, and for the subversion of that of Satan." "Temptations follow tempters, and Satan has awfully prevailed against some persons of a reasoning turn of mind. Not one of them, that I have heard and know of, seems to have received the *love* of the truth, as well as the *knowledge* of the truth. A distinction which appears to me of great importance. A want of simplicity, humility and gravity has likewise been observable in them by all competent judges, even while brilliant talents excited the admiration of pious persons in general."—"I remember that just before I entered on my exposition of the book of Job, I was much more exercised with temptations arising from the awful truths of scrip-

ture, and dispensations of God, than at any time before or since; and I have long thought that this was permitted, among other things, in order to give me more realizing views of that awful subject, the power and agency of evil spirits, than I before had; and that it proved very useful to me in explaining that part of scripture."

"March 14, 1816. Human nature verges to extremes: it is the pendulum, vibrating to and fro, and never stationary *in medio*. Yet truth and duty generally lie *in medio*. The want of solicitude about the salvation of their children, and undue solicitude about accomplishments, preferment, and worldly advantages, which are prominent in most parents, even professors of the gospel, nay, ministers, have been and are a most lamentable evil, and a grievous sign of our times. But, while this is watched and prayed against, we should be careful not to run into any extreme which implies distrust of God, or want of submission to his holy and sovereign will, who doeth what he pleases, but always does what is right; and what all his friends will know to be right at last, and ought to believe to be so now. I am of opinion, that few thus trained up (in a consistent Christian manner,) live and die unconverted. In general, the Lord's method is, I think, first, to bring down our wills into submission, unreserved submission; and then to grant the thing longed for: and the sweetness of unreserved submission,

after many conflicts with unbelief and a rebellious will, has been greater than almost any I ever felt, in having the desires of my heart granted me. This was the final result of my long protracted rebellion against the doctrine of gratuitous election. I shall not forget the sweetness of saying, for substance, *Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight!*"

The following deeply Christian and affecting letter is to his Northumbrian correspondent, who was mourning the loss of a son.

"May 31, 1818. I received your very sorrowful letter, and can truly say, that I sympathize with you in your sorrow, and do pray that the Lord may comfort you under it; and not only so, but greatly sanctify it to your soul. In order to this, I shall make a few remarks on the subject, the result of much reflection on the state of this suffering dying world, and on the instructions of scripture in this particular. All our affections and passions ought to be subordinated to the love of God, and obedience to his his will; and regulated accordingly: so that the *indulgence of sorrow* is as contrary to our duty, as the *indulgence of anger*, though more plausible and deemed more amiable; and therefore less generally and strenuously resisted. We are no more warranted to say, 'I do well to be sorrowful,' (that is, to indulge sorrow,) than *I do well to be angry.* God appoints the event: he is wise, righteous, faithful, and merciful; and we deserve far worse from him. His ap-

pointment is far different from our inclination, or affection; but then we are foolish, partial, wayward, selfish. Whether then is right, his appointment or our inclination? The former, doubtless: and, if so, indulged sorrow is in fact rebellion against that appointment; and as such should be watched, and striven, and prayed against, with all earnestness. The Lord hath taken away from us a beloved object; *the desire of our eyes with a stroke:* but, is He not all sufficient? does He not yet live? is He not an unchangeable good? Surely we should not say, *what have I more?* He that made the beloved object a comfort to us, is able to comfort us without it, immediately, or through other channels. 'But, I must love my child and mourn his loss.' Yes, yet with submission: you must not love your child more than Christ; nor will you, if you be, as I trust his disciple. Here your love and natural affection must be subordinated; else it will appear, that, in taking away the beloved object, he hath in fact taken away an idol. 'But I am not fully satisfied as to his soul.' Well then, there were hopeful tokens, on which to stay your mind. But if it had not been so; think of Eli's two sons, and how, when their doom was denounced, he said, *It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good.* And he bore the tidings of their death: but when it was added, *the ark of God is taken,* he fell and died. Think of David's beloved Absalom; and observe that his strongly marked expressions of

sorrow are universally condemned, as rebellious and ungrateful. Think of the manner in which Job's numerous family were at once cut off; and of his jealousy, lest in their feasting they should sin against God; yet hear him say, *The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. In all this Job sinned not.* I question whether Job was more satisfied as to the state of any of his children's souls, than you are about your son's. Think of dear Lady —— ——: her eldest son executed as a murderer; a hardened wretch, till the last hour; the only hope this, that, in his rage in casting himself off, the rope broke, and he lived till another was fetched,—perhaps ten minutes*—and seemed during that space softened, and earnestly crying for mercy: yet I never heard from her lips a murmuring word. I mention these things to show, that your trial is far less than many of God's most beloved children have suffered: and to encourage your hope that, by his all-sufficient grace, you may be comforted and made joyful, notwithstanding, as they were.

"While our children or relations live, we cannot be too earnest in seeking their salvation; in using every means, and in pouring out our prayers incessantly for it; and in enforcing all by our example: but, when they are removed, as our duty, and our ability to help them finally terminate, our sorrow and anxiety, and inquiries

* I believe at his own earnest request, the time was extended to one or two hours.

about their state, must be unavailing, and are very apt to be rebellious. If conscious of having done what we could, upon the whole, for their final good; and of *seeking* for them, as well as ourselves, FIRST *the kingdom of God and his righteousness;* this should be a source of thankfulness and consolation. If conscious of having neglected our duty, we are called on deeply to repent and earnestly to seek forgiveness. If there were hopeful tokens, we should be thankful for these; and leave the rest to God. If we still anxiously inquire, as if we could not submit, without some further assurance of their happiness; we should consider this as presumption and rebellion. God withholds, and submission is our duty. Jesus, as it were, says, *What is that to thee? follow thou me. Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?* May we not leave them to his tender and infinite mercies? But these considerations should excite us to redoubled diligence and earnestness about those who are still with us. Even in such cases as those of Eli's sons and Absalom, unreserved submission is both the duty and the wisdom of the deeply afflicted sufferer. I can only add, that you must watch and pray against inordinate sorrow, as your sin and your misery; and seek for resignation, submission, and acquiescence in the divine appointment: and never cease praying for this, till you can unreservedly say, *The will of the Lord be done!*—May God be your comforter, and lift up the light of his coun-

tenance upon you, and give you peace! I remain, your's affectionately.

Notwithstanding Mr. Scott's multiplied engagements, and extensive literary pursuits, he found leisure and inclination to attend to the common duties and sympathies of life, and to impart those instructions to youth which would tend to render them respectable in this life, and happy in another.

The following are letters to his granddaughter and a niece who, by the death of her mother, was left at the head of a family.

"July 25, 1816. From the letters which you write, I am disposed to think of you, and write to you, as becoming now a woman, not as a child. God has very bountifully dealt with you, in his providence, in giving you a sound and good understanding, and very valuable opportunities of cultivating it; which, duly improved, will do more for your respectability and comfort in this present life, than either riches, or those showy accomplishments, which you see, and perhaps are tempted to envy, in some of the children of your superiors. But to be capable of doing something useful for ourselves and others is a far better preparation for the future, than the habits of a genteel and useless life. Learn something every day. Every young person who knows how to do something in the evening, which was unknown in the morning, has made an acquisition which nothing can take from him, or her, except by incapacitating either

body or mind for its functions. But you have a far more important advantage afforded you, in the religious instruction and example set before you, and the many fervent prayers poured out for you; and in all your great privileges in this respect. But be sure, my dear Jane, do not rest in these things; nor in notions, nor decency of conduct, nor in a form of religion. Be all in earnest in secret prayer, and often in meditation on what you hear and read, and comparing all with the scriptures. Beg of God for his special converting grace, to change your heart, and, as it were, to graft the tree, that it may bring forth good fruit. O consider your soul—eternity—judgment: consider the anxious desires, and prayers, and hopes, and fears of your dear parents on your account. What delight will it give them, to be satisfied that you have chosen the good part which shall never be taken away from you! how will it be *abundant in many thanksgivings to God;* and rejoice their hearts under every difficulty! How would it gladden my heart, under all my infirmities, to hear of it before I die! What a blessing would you then be to your brothers and sisters! *I will bless thee, and thou shalt be a blessing.* May God bless these hints! May he bless you, and them all!"

"March 13, 1815.—Your situation at present, though it cannot and ought not perhaps to be declined, is one of great importance and difficulty, and probably of temptation; considering how early days the present are with you as to

religion; and how many things being at the head of such a family, will bring under your management, and in your way. But without information as to particulars, I cannot enter on much appropriate counsel. You have two duties: they cannot interfere, but they may *seem* to do so. You must honor, and obey, and oblige your father, in all things, except when a higher duty to God forbids. You must follow his inclination in preference to your own: but not in preference to the will of God: and the more you give up your own will, the more you will find liberty to follow your conscience in respect of the will of God. By prudence and consulting propriety; by meekness and gentleness, united with firmness, in things of importance; it may be practicable to you to maintain comfort and respectability in your situation, and give a happier turn to all domestic concerns. But eagerness and pertinacity in little things, and pliableness in things of importance, will undo, or prevent all this.

"Allow me to touch one subject which I know requires great delicacy. A great deal indeed will depend on your *appearance* and *dress*. I do not want to convert you into a quaker, or put you into livery, but I cannot be faithful without saying, that in your present station, and especially as being known to pay attention to religion, a considerable revolution will be necessary from what I saw when I last met you. You will take the hint in good part; it is well meant;

and, if moderately attended to, as to style, expense, and attention to dress, will have the happiest effects, in every way. Especially it will make way for your becoming acquainted with those who would be a great help to you, and exempted from the giddy acquaintance of those who can only hinder and ensnare you.

"I should particularly recommend *method* to you, in your employments. If you would at all prosper in your soul, you must secure time for retirement, reading the scriptures, and helps in understanding them; and prayer, secret, particular, earnest prayer. Without this nothing will be done. This time, in your situation, will, I apprehend, be best secured by retrenching an hour from sleep, and such things as merely relate to external decoration, in the morning, before your more hurrying engagements begin; and in the evening before it be too late. But securing time in the morning is the grand thing: not that the other should be neglected; but it will necessarily be exposed to more interruptions. A plan, however, should be laid down, and adhered to, with as much regularity, at least, as that about our meals. That must sometimes be broken in upon; yet not often. Above all, as much as possible, secure the whole of the Lord's day, and firmly stand out against Sunday visitings. In addition to this, if you would improve your mind and heart, learn to redeem the fragments of time. Have a book at hand, that when you are waiting perhaps for your father or

friends to dinner, or on similar occasions, you may not let the little oddments of time elapse, or rather heavily drawl on as a burden; but take the book, and read a little; and, if you lift up a short prayer over what you read, so much the better. It is surprising how much I have read and learned in these fragments of time, which most people lose. *Gather up the fragments that nothing be lost.*

"I am afraid your influence, at first at least, will be insufficient for what I am about to add; but persevering, firm, and mild efforts may do much: I mean in avoiding *late visits*, and the *late* entertainment of visitors. Even among pious persons, I scarcely know any thing more hostile to the religion of the closet, that is, the religion of the heart and soul.

"What you mention in respect of original sin, lies at the bottom of all Christianity; and we never learn any thing else to much purpose, till we become deeply sensible of innate depravity; of a *moral disease*, which we cannot cure, and have not heart of ourselves to cure: but which the Lord alone can cure. We ought, however, to seek the cure from Him, as we do health from the physician, by applying to him, trusting him, following his directions, welcoming his medicines, avoiding what he inhibits, &c.—If you propose any special questions to me, in opening your mind as you mention, I will, if able, give you the best counsel I can. I remain, your affectionate uncle."

Mr. Scott's incessant study of the Bible capacitated him in a peculiar manner, for composing a scriptural Concordance. He had this great work also in a course of preparation, during the time under consideration. And about this time he published a translation of the Articles of the Synod of Dort.

In the month of November, 1817, the British nation suffered a severe rebuke in the death of the favorite Princess Charlotte. Like a true lover of his country he wept over its sorrows with all the sympathy of youthful patriotism. He published a sermon on the occasion, entitled "The voice of God to Britain." A letter written in December says, "I never saw him so overwhelmed by any calamity. His spirits are, however, now revived in some measure, and he seems gratified by the manner in which the nation at large has received the chastisement. His sermons on the Sabbath after he received the news were the most affecting, distressingly so indeed. He was so overpowered by his feelings that it was with the utmost difficulty he proceeded. It is said age chills the affections, but this is not the case with him. He is all tenderness and sympathy,—daily, indeed, becoming more like Christ. I sometimes feel alarmed at seeing him ripen so fast for glory. O that we might catch some portion of his spirit before he is taken from us."

In 1818, the proprietors of the Commentary proposed to stereotype the work. It was desi-

rable, of course, that it should be made as perfect as possible, and that Mr. Scott should, as far as life and mental powers were spared, superintend the revisal. Accordingly, at the age of seventy-one he commenced the laborious work of revision, still not intending it should supersede his preparation of the Concordance. But as the work advanced he found himself so engaged in preparing copy and correcting proofs that he found little leisure to complete the Concordance, and was finally obliged to relinquish the undertaking. This is to be regretted, as upon the plan he adopted he hoped to make it a more perfect work of the kind than any yet published.

In Dec. 1818, he writes, "Preparing copy, five sheets (forty quarto pages) a week, and correcting proofs, together with the desire of the partners to have the Concordance carried on, proposing ere long to begin to print it, makes me shrink unduly from letter-writing. I never studied each day more hours than I now do."

February 18, 1819. "Never was a manufactory more full of constant employment than our house; five proofs a week to correct, and many sheets of copy to prepare. The first volume is nearly finished, and I hope much improved; yet I feel more and more dissatisfied, as discerning more and more the defects. What I have lately been finishing off, as to the Concordance, is fully approved, but I can do so little now that I fear it will never be finished. So

I have lived to enter on my seventy-third year, which I never expected, and am still able to study and preach, may it be to good purpose. My feelings are often very uneasy, but I am free from great and sharp sufferings. Pray for me that I may be patient and ready."

Afterwards he writes "as to the concordance it is adjourned *sine die*. After years of labour and considerable expense, I relinquish it that I might attend to what appeared to me more directly the improvement of my talent, and the use of my few remaining days. A few months might have completed it, but I deliberately determined in this respect to take my labour for my pains, and to expect neither credit nor profit, nor even usefulness for my labour. They prepared me for revising my Commentary to better advantage, especially by adducing references to notes throughout."

During these years, in addition to the loss of many friends, Mr. Scott was subject to frequent ill turns, as well as the increasing decrepitude of age. His constant infirmities were asthma, pain in the teeth, and an inveterate nausea. But the effect on him was different from the usual effect of disease on aged persons. His feelings of a kind and tender nature seemed to become acute, and all those of an angry or harsh kind seemed nearly extinct. It was affecting to observe, how, if he had dropped a word that seemed to himself impatient, (though others did not perceive it) or suited to wound the feelings

of any one, though ever so slightly, he would presently, with tears, give his hand to the party concerned, and ask forgiveness. On him the religion of Jesus seemed to have its whole effect; even to transform him, in a high degree, into the image of God's dear Son. The object of God's dealings with us, is to make us holy, to purify us for himself. Afflictions of themselves will make us no better. It is when we endeavor to make a right use of them, and listen to the teachings of the Spirit in them, that we are made holy by them.

Here follows his last letter to his friend in Northumberland.

"Dear Mrs. R——, A letter from you, though to spread your troubles before me, seems a refreshment to me, as it reminds me of former times; and because I consider all who are converted by your means, or in answer to your prayers, as in some measure the fruit of my former labours. But I am now old (in my seventy-fifth year,) and infirm, and diseased in various ways, and incapable of much exertion; yet I still preach once every Lord's day, and expound in my house in the evening. I am also yet employed with my pen, almost as much as formerly, in preparing and superintending a new stereotype edition of my Family Bible; but with painfulness and weariness, which leave me little time or spirits for correspondence. I bless God, however, that, though excluded by deafness from much conversation, my eye-sight is not materi-

ally impaired; and I can use my pen as nimbly as ever.

"I can sympathise with you in your feelings concerning your children, and children's children. All my children are, I trust, serving God: and my anxiety, as far as that is concerned, is about my grandchildren, of whom I have nineteen. I pray in hope, that they will be gathered one by one, though most of them after my death; and in this hope, I use such means as I can; and desire to leave the whole with a sovereign God who delighteth in mercy.

"You must go on, blessing God for what he has done; using what means you can with those that are yet *without*, and the furthest off; and *persist* in prayer for them. You must stir up such of your children as serve God to do what they can—and probably, if zealous with a loving and prudent zeal, they may do more than you can,—and to concur with you in prayer for them: and thus you must endeavor to bow in submission to God; to wait his time; to be willing to leave the world without witnessing their conversion; yet hoping and praying that they will at length be converted. The promises of God to his people are so far encouraging yet he has not absolutely engaged for the conversion of all and every one: and we must leave that painful subject, (*casting all our care on God*,) till the bright world to which we are going shall fully satisfy us that He did all wisely and well.

"I can truly say I seldom forget you and

your's. I have lost my only brother, aged eighty-six, and my only sister aged seventy-seven, during the last year; and am the only survivor of thirteen children; and am dropping into the grave. May we be well prepared to go whenever the summons comes! Pray for me and mine: for me especially, that God would give me stronger faith; more lively, assured hope; more patience; more love; that I may *finish my course with joy.* Earnestly begging of our most merciful God abundantly to bless you and all your's, I remain, dear Mrs. R——, your affectionate friend and servant."

CHAPTER XIII.

Close of his ministry—Introductory observations—Journal of his illness—His death—Extracts from memorandums—Reflections.

Mr. Scott had been particularly anxious through his whole ministry, to be preserved from dishonouring his holy profession; and the nearer he came to the time of his dismissal he became the more earnest in prayer that God would uphold him during the scenes of trial and suffering that might await him before his last hour. During several years his health had been gradually failing; he viewed his departure nigh at hand,

and contemplated it with calmness and tranquility. Yet he remitted nothing of his accustomed labour. His last sermon was delivered March 4, 1821, from the words of the Apostle Paul, *He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things.* In the evening of the same day he expounded as usual to several of his parishioners, assembled in his house, from the parable of the Pharisee and Publican. He entered with much animation into both these subjects, and in the evening he applied to himself in a very affecting manner, the prayer of the penitent Publican, *God be merciful to me a sinner.* In this striking manner did he close his public testimony to the faith he had kept during his preceding ministry. With such feelings as these did he approach the bed of death. No wonder he found it a bed of consolation.

It is the tenour of the life, not that of a few morbid and suffering scenes which precede dissolution, that fixes the character. Good men may be unreasonably depressed and dejected, and bad men supported and elevated, in the near prospect of death, from the mere operation of natural causes. We are not authorized by scripture to place any dependance on the last period of sinking nature, through which the Christian may be called to pass to his eternal reward. The deaths of the saints described in the inspired volume, are, without exception, the concluding scenes of long and consistent previ-

ous devotedness to the services of God. Such are those of Isaac, Jacob, Moses and David. That of Stephen is the only narrative of this kind in the New Testament, which regards the article of death at all; and the circumstances in which he was placed, as the first martyr in the Christian Church, may well account for the exception. The great Apostle of the Gentiles, and the other founders of the new dispensation, are exhibited to us in the holiness of their lives, in the calmness of their approach towards death, in the deliberate judgment they form of their past labours, in their exhortations to others to supply their vacant posts of duty, in their triumphant anticipation of their future reward, but not in the actual moment of their final conflict. It would, therefore, have been no subject of surprise if the last days of Mr. Scott had been wholly clouded by the natural operations of disease. But, though no importance is to be attached to these hours of fainting mortality, with reference to the acceptance and final triumph of the dying christian, yet when it pleases God to afford grace to the dying christian to seal a long and consistent life by a triumphant death, we are called on to record with gratitude the divine goodness, and be encouraged to persevere in faith and hope.

It has been observed that Mr. Scott finished his public ministration on March 4. He was considerably indisposed through the week, which continued with various alterations of encourage-

ment and discouragement until the nineteenth, by which time he was reduced to extreme weakness.

March 20, scarcely a hope of recovery remained, and a cloud of gloom rested on the revered sufferer's mind; doubtless occasioned by the power of disease on his body, as it always attended the paroxysms of fever. Yet he seldom lost his hope of final victory.

21. During a period of great distress he sent for his son to come to his chamber, observing he wished "to speak of something of a worldly nature." He told him that it was time for planting his usual crop of potatoes for the poor, and he wished such measures might be adopted for doing it, as would best secure the benefit to those for whom it was intended after his decease. An instance of the "ruling passion strong in death;" his care of the poor, blended with his love of gardening, which induced him to cultivate every corner of waste land for their benefit.

22. He appeared approaching near his end, but the darkness which hovered over his mind, began to disperse, and he seemed to rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. He requested that the Lord's Supper might be administered to him, as a means of grace, through which he might receive the consolation he was seeking. The scene was an affecting one, rendered so by the fervor he displayed, contrasted with his poor emaciated frame. It seemed to be a cordial to his spirits, so that he could adopt the

words of the venerable Simeon, *Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.* And he was enabled to discern that much of his uncomfortable state of mind had been the effect of fever.

23. During the day the paroxysm of fever returned, and with it great distress and gloom. He grew calm, and exercised much submission. *Thou art righteous*, was the language of his heart, and of his lips.

24. His sufferings were great but his mind was in a delightful state—very desirous to depart, and somewhat disquieted at the thought of a lingering illness.

26. Much weaker in body, but more calm in mind, anxious to depart, yet willing to stay, if he might do any spiritual good to any one.

28. His pulse indicated approaching dissolution, but he could think and speak with energy and clearness. He exhibited much humility, faith, tenderness and love. He appeared like his Saviour, yet still longing for more holiness.

30. His situation was thus described by a spectator. "His illness has been quite extraordinary for one of his age, and so much reduced. The fever has been so violent—his colour, at times, almost resembling mahogany—and his pulse from one hundred and fifty, to one hundred and seventy-five. Being under the influence of fever last night, he lost sight of those joyful feelings he had before manifested, and was gloomy. This morning his language was

more cheerful, and his prayers of an elevated kind; as, "that he might be one of those in whom *Christ should come to be glorified in that day, &c.*"

April 3. Several new and unfavorable symptoms appeared; though a pitiable object of weakness and suffering, his mind was, in most respects, vigorous, and his memory quick and correct. It was solemn and interesting to observe the pious workings of his mind.

5. In every thing but comfort, his state might be said to be *sublimely christian.* Such an awful sense of eternal things, of the evil of sin, and of the holiness of God—such profound self abasement—such cleaving unto Christ alone—such patience, resignation, and unlimited submission to the will of God—such a constant spirit of fervent prayer—such pouring forth of blessings on all around him—with such minute and tender attention to all their feelings, as was truly admirable to behold. His state was bright in every one's view, but his own. His habitual temper was that which the words of Job describe. *Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.* His deafness almost wholly confined him to his own resources; not being able even to hear prayer when offered in his presence. Owing to this circumstance he often prayed and thought aloud; and the strain of his thoughts, thus discovered, was frequently striking and highly elevated.

10. He observed, "I find myself much more able *to approach unto God* than I was, but such a sense of unworthiness as I cannot express."

On parting with his family at night, he said, "God knows how well I love you all; but I have *no* wish to see any of you again in this world."

13. His weakness increased, but his positive sufferings appeared less, and his mind calm and cheerful. At times he expressed considerable apprehension of the pang of death.

16. At half past six o'clock in the evening, he ceased to breathe, quietly as an infant falling asleep, and with a beautiful look of composure. One of his last efforts was to give his hand to his weeping servant; a striking evidence that the tender attention to the feelings of those around him, which characterized his whole illness, continued to form a prominent feature in his state of mind, even to the last. After this, which took place about five minutes before his death, he appeared to be lost in prayer; but just at the moment, when he reclined his head on the breast of his attendant, the expressions of his countenance suddenly changed from that of prayer, and indicated a transition to feelings of admiring and adoring praise, with a calmness and peace which were quite inexpressible, and strongly impressed upon the beholder the idea that like Stephen he saw things invisible to mortal eye.

The following are a few extracts from memorandums of Mr. Scott's expressions, made during his illness, by his daughter.

In the time of darkness and gloom he prayed without ceasing, and with inexpressible fervour. He seemed unconscious of any one's being near

him, and gave vent to his mental feelings without restraint. "I think nothing," he said, "of my bodily pains, my soul is all. I trust all will end well, but it is a dreadful conflict. I hope—I fear—I tremble—I pray. O to enter eternity with one doubt on the mind! Eternity! Eternity! Eternity! People talk of assurance not being attainable in this world, nor perhaps much to be desired. They and the devil agree on this point. O what a thing *sin* is! *Who knoweth the power of his wrath* ? If this be the way to heaven, what must be the way to hell ? *If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear* ?"

He rejected every attempt to comfort him by reminding him of the way in which he had served and glorified God. "Christ is all," he said; "he is my *only* hope."

In the midst of his conflict, he generally expressed hope of final victory, but thought he should die under a cloud. He accused himself of self indulgence and slackness in prayer; of having made his religious labors an excuse for shortness in devotion.

His first clear consolation was after receiving the Lord's Supper on March 22. He had previously observed; "An undue stress is by some laid upon this ordinance, as administered to the sick, and I think others of us are in danger of undervaluing it. It is a *means of grace*, and may prove God's instrument of conveying to me the comfort I am seeking.' The scene was in-

describable. His fervour, his humility, the way in which he raised his emaciated hands to heaven, his pallid dying countenance, so full of love, and expressive of every thing heavenly and holy, all together were most overpowering. Shortly after the service was concluded, he said, *Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.* Through the remainder of the day, and during the night, he continued in a very happy frame of mind."

He had some refreshing sleep and awoke in great calmness. "This" he said, "is heaven begun! I have done with darkness *forever, forever.* Satan is vanquished. Nothing now remains but salvation *with eternal glory,—eternal glory.*"

A message was communicated to him from a clerical friend, expressive of the great benefit he had been to the Church of Christ. "Now this," said he, "is doing me harm. *God be merciful to me a sinner*, is the only ground on which I can rest. If I am saved God shall have all the glory."

"I hope I leave something," he said, referring to his writings, "which may do good to the industrious; and *nothing* can do good to the idle."

During a violent paroxysm of fever (March 23) his sufferings were extreme, and his mind confused and gloomy. "All my calm and comfort," said he, "are gone, nothing now remains of them but a faint recollection,—and that I can pray for you. Well, after all, God is greater

than Satan. Is not Christ all-sufficient? Can he not *save to the uttermost*? Hath he not promised to save? Lord, deliver me. Suffer not Satan to prevail! Pity, pity, Lord, pity me."

In the evening his fever abated, and he became calm. His mind dwelt much upon love. "*God is love, and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him. Faith that worketh by love.* One evidence I have of meetness for heaven,—I feel such love for all mankind—to *every* man upon earth—to those who have most opposed and slandered me."

"At any rate I have been a *plain* man. *The hypocrite*—the formalist—*will not pray always.* I have always resolved to enter eternity praying. Lord save me! *now* the time is come."

To his servant, "I thank you for all your kindness to me. You have been a faithful domestic, and I hope a conscientious one. If at any time I have been hasty and sharp, forgive me, and pray God to forgive me; but lay the blame upon *me*, not upon religion." At another time, "Pray for me; I value your prayers, and that not a whit the less, because you are a servant. I have often prayed for *you*, and I trust blessings have come upon you in consequence. Pray for *me*, that, through your prayers thanksgivings may redound unto God."

To a clergyman; "Count it an honor, without recompense or reward, in the midst of frowns and oppositions, to *preach the unsearchable riches of Christ* to poor sinners; to help to send his

word all over the earth. None but Jesus can do *us* good; nor can we do any good to others but by him. I have suffered more this fortnight, than in all my seventy-four years; and Christ has appeared to me a hundred, yea a thousand times, if possible, more precious and glorious than ever: sin, more hateful and evil: salvation more to be desired and valued. Christ is *all*—the love of Christ—the power of Christ. *To me to live is Christ; and to die*, I hope, will be *gain.* I have *found* more in him, than I ever expected to *want.*"

To his daughter; "I used about this time in the evening to pray for you all; but I have no power now; hardly any to pray for myself. You must pray for me. Let me look to Christ to intercede for me. I have not quite failed to improve the privilege of access to God by Christ—of his intercession: but I have not availed myself of it as I ought. I hope you will all value and improve this inestimable privilege."

To his wife; "God be your father, and your husband. I trust all mine will be kind to you. You have been a great blessing to me. We shall I trust meet in heaven. I have less doubt of you, than of myself."

After mentioning his acute sufferings, of the severity of which he had no previous conception, he added, "If my continuance here in them could be of the least spiritual benefit to any one, I should be willing to wait."

On taking some refreshment: "When *I* do not

like any thing, I leave it; but the Saviour, though the cup was so bitter, did not leave it, till he could say, *It is finished.*"

"I have not that comfort I could wish; but I think my mind is made up to bear quietly whatever God may please to send me, however uncomfortable even to the end, if it be for his glory."

On Tuesday morning, March 27, he appeared dying, and suffered exquisitely. "Oh," he said, "it is hard work. Death is a new acquaintance; a terrible one, except as Christ *giveth us the victory*, and the *assurance* of it. My flesh and my heart seem as if they wanted to fail, and could not. Who can tell what that tie is which binds body and soul together? How easily is it loosened in some; what a *wrench* and *tear* is it in others. Lord, loosen it, if it be thy will I hope it is not wrong to pray for a release. If it be, God forgive me. Yet if it be thy will that I should wait for days and weeks, *Thou art righteous.*"

"*Father glorify thy name*," was his frequent language. His deep humility—the simplicity of his faith in Christ—his hatred of sin—his spirituality of mind—his meekness, gentleness, and love, struck us all with admiration. He indeed *received the kingdom of God as a little child.* The very way in which he mentioned the name of the Saviour, it was delightful to hear. He seemed as much like him as one can conceive any thing on earth to be. But his de-

sires after holiness were such as would never be satisfied, till he *awaked in his likeness.*"

"Oh Lord, magnify in me thy glory:—thy justice—thy hatred of sin—thy love—thy truth—thy pity—and then take me to thyself."

"I *hope*, though I cannot but feel some *fear;* and it is such an *eternal risk*, of such *infinite* importance, that the slightest fear seems to counterbalance even prevalent hope."

To his nephew; "Hate sin more—Love Christ more—pray more earnestly—beware of covetousness—avoid animal *indulgencies, if you would lie easy on a death-bed.*"

Once he said, "*Change this vile body of humiliation, that it might be like thy glorified body,* O Saviour But above all let me have thy glorious holiness both of body and soul.—How varying are my feelings! but the great event cannot depend on what passes in a few half delirious days. No, my hope rests on a better foundation,—on my being found in Christ—made the righteousness of God in him. Oh for faith—faith that worketh by love—purifieth the heart—overcometh the world."

On one occasion after complaining of interruption by which he had been prevented from praying, he thought, for an hour and an half, on being reminded how soon he would serve serve God both day and night without ceasing, he exclaimed with an energy of which we thought him incapable, "O what a transition!"

This transition he did experience, unaccom-

panied too, by the realization of many fears. He feared he should be left to bring a stain upon that glorious cause of which he had long stood forth as the champion, the cause of truth. He feared that in the period of enfeebled powers he should be left to *unsay* any thing which in a more sound state of mind he had inculcated, and should thus give advantage to the enemies of the doctrines of the cross. He feared lest under the influence of delirium, he should be driven to say or do things offensive and dishonorable to God. And at times, though not generally, he even dreaded the *consequences* of death. But a dread of death itself, of the act and agony of dying, harrassed his mind. "No man," he said, "can tell me what death is; and I have an *iron-strength* of constitution which makes me tremble for the last struggle." And he often apprehended, he should depart under gloom and darkness. But God was better to him than his fears. *Not one thing that he feared came upon him; but every hope was exceeded.*

These specimens of Mr. Scott's dying expressions convey to our minds the most unequivocal testimony of a frame of mind, best suited to his circumstances, the most acceptable to God, and the most cheering to those deeply interested in his eternal welfare. It is perfectly true that indications of deep thought—of occasional perturbation—of anxious searching and launching forward, as it were, into the depths and obscurities of futurity—and of the heavy

pressure of sin on the conscience, discover themselves in his dying expressions. It is perfectly true also that some clouds occasionally interposed, and veiled to his sinking eyes for the moment, the glories of the invisible world. It is true that his dying scene presents to us an individual walking rather in the twilight of enjoyment, where the sun and the shade were struggling for victory, than in a region of unmixed happiness. But are not such thoughts and anxieties the natural accompaniments of every step of our pilgrimage; and, if finally dispersed by the light of faith, and hope, and christian joy, does not their presence supply even a stronger evidence, to the bystander, of the safety of the individual, than their absence? Undisturbed serenity may be undisturbed delusion. A calm after anxiety is a victory after the battle—is the palm when the battle is won. And such was the case of Mr. Scott.

Though Mr. Scott passed through *deep waters*, and sometimes *walked in darkness*, during his last illness, it is not to be supposed that this was his constant, or even his habitual situation; much less that fear of the final event prevailed in him. No: hope as to that point generally predominated, though he would say, "Even one fear, *where infinity is at stake*, is sufficient to countervail all its consoling effects." But the present conflict was severe; and his holy soul could conceive of many evils, short of the failure of final salvation, from which he shrunk back

with horror. There can be no doubt that these distressing feelings were very much the effect of disease, as they increased and abated with the paroxysm of his fever; yet, with the scriptures in our hands we cannot hesitate to concur in his judgment, that the malignant powers of darkness took advantage of this in a peculiar manner, to harrass and distress him.

The remarkable sufferings of so eminent a saint, in his last sickness, may perhaps perplex the mind of a young christian. But such a person should remember that the way to heaven is ordinarily a way of tribulation; and that the greatest honour God puts on his servants is, to call them to such circumstances of affliction as display and manifest his grace. What would have discouraged a weak and unstable penitent, with immature knowledge of the promises of salvation, only illustrated the faith of the venerable subject of this memoir. God adapts the burden to the strength. But even in the midst of his afflictive feelings, it is manifest to every real judge of such a case, that a living and strong faith was in vigorous activity. Almost every word he uttered is an expression of this principle. For consolation is one thing, faith another. This latter grace often lays hold of the promises made in Christ, with the firmest grasp, at the very time when hope and comfort are interrupted by the morbid state of the corporeal and mental powers. Our feelings and frames are not the foundation on which we build. Never

perhaps was stronger faith exhibited even by our Saviour himself, than when he uttered those piercing words, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me.*

But it may be further remarked, that very important ends were doubtless to be answered by these sufferings, not only to the church generally, but to the venerable sufferer. Possibly his extraordinary talents, his extensive success, his long and familiar acquaintance with all the topics of theology, his surprising influence over a wide circle of readers, may have required this last struggle to check every remaining tendency to self-elevation and make him feel more deeply than ever what he confessed through life in so unfeigned a manner, that he was in himself nothing but a most guilty and unworthy sinner.

Throughout Mr. Scott's illness, all his temper and dispositions marked a soul ripe for heaven. His *patience* was most exemplary, though this was the grace which, almost more than any other, he feared would fail; but it increased to the end. On the only point on which any approach to impatience had been discovered—*his desire to depart*—he had become almost perfectly resigned. His *kindness* and affection to all who approached him, were carried to the greatest height, and shewed themselves in a singularly minute attention to all their feelings, and whatever might conduce to their comfort, to a degree that was quite affecting; especially at a time when he was suffering so much himself, often

in mind as well as body. Even in the darkest time, *Thou art righteous! Father glorify thy name!* solemnly enunciated, was the sentence most frequently on his lips, and marked his profound *submission.* His *humility* and sense of utter unworthiness seemed more deep than words can express. It need scarcely be said that *Christ* was now more precious in his eyes than ever; and his expressions of exclusive, undivided and adoring adherence to him for salvation, if possible more strong. At the same time, he refused the appropriation to himself of those promises which belong only to true believers in Christ, except as it could be shewn that he bore the *character* commonly annexed to the *promise*,—such as those that *fear* the Lord, that *love* God, *repent*, *believe* and *obey.* When he could not trace this in himself, he would have recourse only to those which encourage even the chief of sinners to come to Christ, and assure them, that *him that cometh he will in no wise cast out.*

Thus lived, and thus died the Rev. Thomas Scott. A man in whom, and by whom, the God of grace chose to glorify himself, by plucking him as a brand from the burning, and using him as an instrument, in erecting that building of which Jesus Christ is the chief corner stone.

CHAPTER XIV.

His Character—Habits—Sentiments on Education.

Of Mr. Scott it may emphatically be said, that *he fought a good fight, finished his course, and kept the faith.* The manner in which he was called to the spiritual combat was remarkable. His narrative of his spiritual change, will be classed in future times with the most important of those various works, which in different ages have recorded the triumphs of the gospel of Christ. "The Force of Truth" affords a striking illustration of divine grace, and sets before us an impressive picture of a laborious and successful investigation of truth. It reminds the reader of the early history of Luther, painfully working out his own way by intense prayer and study of the scriptures; a circumstance which distinguished that great reformer. The church has seen few examples, in these latter days, of the efficacy of the doctrine of Christ, so minutely and satisfactorily detailed by the avowals of the individuals, as in the instance we are now considering. We here behold a man of strong natural powers, intrenched in the sophistries of human pride, and a determined opponent to almost all the chief truths of the gospel, gradually convinced and subdued. We see him engaging in a laborious study of the scripture with opinions

and prejudices firmly fixed, and reluctantly to admit a humiliating scheme of theology; yet borne on, contrary to his expectations, his wishes and worldly interest, by the simple energy of truth. We view him, to his own dismay, arriving at one doctrine after another. We behold him making every step sure as he advances, till at length, he works out, by his own diligent and anxious investigation of the sacred volume, all the parts of divine truth, which he afterwards discovered to be the common faith of the church of Christ, the essentials of divine revelation. He was thus taught the apostolical doctrines, of the apostacy of man, of his impotency to any thing spiritually good, the atonement of Christ, the triunity of persons in the Godhead, regeneration and progressive sanctification by the Holy Spirit, justification by faith only, and salvation by grace. These great principles he perceived to be indissolubly connected with repentance unto life, separation from the sinful customs and spirit of the world, self-denial, bearing reproach for Christ's sake, holy love to God and man, and active engagedness in the service of God.

After he had once discovered and embraced the chief doctrines of the New Testament, he may truly be said to have *kept the faith,* with undeviating constancy. During forty-five years, he continued to teach and write and live, in the spirit of those holy principles. There are few writers in whom consistency is so con-

spicuous through so many voluminous works. His scheme of doctrine was not more apostolical than his method of elucidating it was perspicuous. He *kept the faith* by supporting a theology, not only pure and orthodox, but scripturally exact in its arrangement, proportions and harmony, and applying its several doctrines to their appropriate use. In this view, the habit which he had formed of studying the scriptures for himself, and of diligently comparing all its parts with each other, was of essential service to him. He entered as fully into the great system of plain means and duties on the one hand, as of the mysterious doctrines of divine grace on the other.

With such fidelity it is not surprising that he had, like the apostle before him, *to fight a good fight.* He was not a man to receive the impression of his age, but to give it. On various occasions he thought it incumbent on him to come forward publicly in defence of the faith of the gospel; a task, in the execution of which, the firmest adherence to truth, and a candid treatment of his opponents, were ever united with singular knowledge of Scripture, with a simple honesty of purpose, and principle, which it was difficult for an impartial inquirer to withstand.

In these and other labours he *finished his course.* For his attention was not absorbed by his writings. He was a laborious minister in every function of that sacred calling, and es-

pecially in the more retired walks of it. In the pulpit, indeed, an asthmatical affection, added to a strong provincial accent, an inattention to style and manner, united with prolixity, rendered his discourses less attractive than those of many inferior men; though even here, such were the richness and originality of his matter, with his evident acquaintance with scripture, and the human heart, and such the skill he evinced as a christian moralist, that by hearers of attentive minds, he was heard with respect and delight. But in visiting the sick, in resolving cases of conscience, in counselling young ministers, in assisting various religious and benevolent institutions, his success was peculiarly great. Indeed if his exertions as an author were left out of consideration, his other labours for forty-five years, as the chaplain of a hospital, as a parish minister, as a member of society, and of the christian church, would place him on a level with most pious clergymen, however zealous, diligent or useful.

But his most extensive field of usefulness was as a Commentator on the Holy Scriptures. In this he may be truly said to have *finished his course*, as well as *fought a good fight*, and *kept the faith*. It is difficult to form a just estimate of a work on which such an author laboured for thirty-three years. It entitles him to rank at the head of the theologians of his own time, as the most laborious and important writer of the day. The principal excellence of this valu-

able and immense undertaking, consists in his following more closely than any other the fair and direct meaning of every part of scripture, without regard to the niceties of human systems; it is in every sense of the expression a scriptural comment. Every part of it is thought out by the author for himself; not borrowed from others. The later editions are enriched with brief and valuable quotations from several writers of credit, but the substance of the work is entirely his own.

Mr. Scott's excellence was not confined to his public character. He was a christian in all the walks of life. The religion of Jesus was his rule; the example of Jesus his pattern.

Determination of mind in serving God formed the basis of his character, and gave strength and firmness to the whole. His decision of character appeared principally in his religion. His temper and conduct were governed by the doctrines and precepts of the Bible. No one could ever mistake him. He ever avowed what he conscientiously believed to be true. Frank and sincere in his disposition, he stooped to no subterfuge, he needed no disguise. His own slow and reluctant manner of receiving truth at first, inspired him with confidence that he was right, and nothing could turn him aside. His powerful discriminating judgment, united with his superior knowledge of scripture, gave such firmness to his mental and active habits, that he seemed like a giant among children,

regardless of their puny opposition, and intent only on the achievements of his own great objects. It must not be denied that he sometimes erred by want of sufficient consideration for the feelings and prejudices of others; and was sometimes betrayed into rudeness and over confidence; but these were human failings which he constantly opposed, and as he advanced in life gradually subdued, while his sterling honesty and decision, the spring of all his usefulness, remained unimpaired.

Extraordinary diligence was a prominent trait in his character. He was always at work, always redeeming time, yet never exhibited haste. His heart was given to his pursuits; his labour was his delight. He gradually acquired in an unusual degree, the habit of abstracting his mind from sensible objects, and of concentrating his thoughts on a particular topic; nor would the interruptions inseparable from a hurried journey, or from a walk through the busy scenes of a great city, divert his mind on such occasions. By this means, he lived twice the time, that most students do, in the same number of years. To support this he had an iron-strength of constitution. For more than forty-five years, he daily studied eight or ten hours and frequently twelve or fourteen. His relaxations were often equal to the diligence of others. But it was not merely incessant labour which distinguished this remarkable man, it was labour directed to important purposes. He

was not merely studious, but studious of what was immediately useful. He was not a desultory reader, attracted by every novelty, and wasting his time on the fashiorable publications of the day, but chose such works as were beneficial, and subservient to his own pursuits. From the age of fifteen he was entirely self-taught, his means of purchasing books were small, and his access to libraries extremely limited. He never remitted his exertions to improve his works. After thirty-three years bestowed on his Comment, he was as assiduous in revising, as he had been in improving it. The marginal references cost him seven years of labour. And the interval between the fourth and fifth editions was employed in attempting a Concordance on a new plan but which he did not live to complete.

In his domestic circle his character was most exemplary. No blot ever stained his name. What he appeared in his preaching and writings, that he was among his children and servants. He carried his religion into his house, and placed before his family the doctrines he taught, embodied in his own uprightness of conduct. He was a man of much conversation. All his studies and pursuits were talked over with his family. He was indeed *always and in every place apt to teach*, so that even his domestics gradually acquired a degree of information, on a diversity of subjects, which made them appear enlightened, when compared with most persons

of the same rank in life. He exhibited to his family, a holy and amiable pattern of true piety—he was a man of God—imperfect indeed, but consistent and sincere. Accordingly all his children, through grace, became hopefully pious during his life. He lived to experience the fulfilment of that gracious promise, *I will be a God to thee, and to thy seed.* Our Heavenly Father has instituted an inseparable connexion between our duty and our happiness. There is reason to believe that those parents, who, in the exercise of strong faith, dedicate their children to God in the way of his appointment, and *faithfully* perform the conditions of the covenant in bringing them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, will eventually meet them in glory. Gen. xviii, 19. Prov. xxii, 6. It is true that many pious persons have profligate children, but the cause may generally be found, even by short-sighted man, in some radical defect in education. There is such a thing as parents being pious for themselves and not for their children. No doubt can be entertained of the piety of Eli. Yet divine judgments were denounced upon his posterity *because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not.* Nor does this militate against the doctrine of divine sovereignty, which sometimes chooses the children of wicked and abandoned parents, to make them *fellow citizens with the saints*, and members of the *household of God.*

A *devotional* spirit was a conspicuous orna-

ment of Mr. Scott's character. He lived *near to God.* He prayed not only for himself, but for others, for the conversion of a world lying in wickedness, the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom. Intercessory prayer was his delight; and on his dying bed he thought he had failed less in that duty, than in any other. And what christian is there who does not love to intercede at the Throne of Grace, for a world of sinners, for his country, his relatives, his friend, *who is as his own soul*—that his divine Redeemer may be glorified in them all. What more delightful employment can there be than that of mutual intercession.

> "There is a place where spirits blend,
> "Where friend holds fellowship with friend;
> "Though sundered far, by faith they meet
> "Around one common mercy seat."

His faith and patience under affliction must not be omitted. His constitution was robust, but his health was not good. His ill health, perplexities and trials have been noticed. Allusion has been made to his mortifications and vexations. Those who observed him in seasons of peculiar difficulty were often reminded of the words of the Royal Preacher, *The Spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity.* This seemed to be the brief history of his life. Perhaps few writers who ultimately attain the esteem and influence which this remarkable man possessed for the last twenty years of his labours, ever reached such an eminence through greater dis-

couragements of almost every description. During the twenty five years preceding that period, he had experienced inconveniences and difficulties in a degree that scarcely can be imagined by any but his intimate friends.

It is the character of the righteous that they trust in God; place unlimited confidence in his wisdom, power and disposition to take care of them. Though sensible of their unworthiness and nothingness, they fully believe, because he has said it, that they *shall be in everlasting remembrance.* Hence when in adverse circumstances they realize that *affliction cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground,* but that it is the *hand of God that hath touched them.* They know too, because he hath said it, that *he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men, but for their profit that they may be partakers of his holiness.* With such views, they not only submit, but they acquiesce in his dispensations, confident that he knows what is best for them, and and will so order their temporal circumstances as to promote their spiritual good. Though povertyand perplexities are their constant lot, they unite diligence in business with unshaken confidence in their Heavenly Father to supply their daily wants. *God will provide,* is their motto: they therefore *trust in the Lord, and stay themselves upon their God.* Such was the faith of Mr. Scott. He lived by faith, and he reaped the reward of faith.

Disinterestedness was also a striking feature in the character of Mr. Scott. It was a favorite maxim with him, that what is best for the soul, is *really* best for us. He always looked upon worldly possessions for himself or his family, with a jealous eye. Particularly he deprecated the idea of clergymen *aspiring* at wealth—meaning by that term much more moderate property than some would understand. His expressions at the beginning of his religious course will not be forgotten. "We are to live at the altar; but a *living*, a bare decent maintenance, without any avaricious or ambitious views of advancing ourselves or our families should content us." He acted on this principle through life.

This view of Mr Scott's character may be closed by noticing the gradual but regular advance which he made in every branch of real godliness, and especially in overcoming his constitutional failings. This is the best test of christian sincerity. His failings, as has been intimated, lay on the side of roughness and severity of temper, pride of intellect, and confidence in his powers. But from the time when he obeyed with his whole heart the truth of the gospel, he set himself to struggle against them, to study self-control; and he gradually so increased in habitual mildness, humility, and tenderness for others, as to become as exemplary for these virtues, as he had long been for the opposite qualities of religious courage, firmness and determination. He used to observe, "that

is of vastly greater importance than any particular branch which is to be acquired by it.

4. Another thing which he considered of importance was, forming them to habits of contentment with their condition in life. Impressing upon their minds the importance of conforming to their station and circumstances, in their style of living, dress, company, &c.

5. On the subject of religious instruction, his views were in some measure altered. He was convinced he had done too little by way of storing their minds with passages of scripture, catechisms, &c. not only from want of time, but from an unfounded fear of producing formality. Observation of *facts* had produced this change in his sentiments. He now considered it essential to have the memory, while in youth, occupied with scripture truths, that the reception of errour might in a considerable degree be prevented. His principal method of instruction had been by family devotion, reading and expounding the scriptures, by the general tenor of conversation in his family, by improving passing occurrences for the occasion of religious remarks; and teaching young persons to take a religious and christian view of whatever took place. While children were young he would have his daily expositions adapted to their understanding. He would have evening worship at such an early hour that children of seven or eight years of age might be present.

6. He pressed the importance of parents

gaining the affections of their children, inducing them to prefer their company and conversation to that of others, and to make them their confidents. He thought every method should be taken to train up their children to union and cordiality. Let them be guarded, and taught to guard against every thing that would tend to weaken the bond of friendship which ought to exist between children of the same family. There will be different turns of mind, there will be temptations to envy, jealousy and murmurings, but discord should be watched against as the deadliest foe to a family. Respectability, happiness, usefulness, all depend upon its exclusion. *A threefold cord is not soon broken*, but a house divided *cometh to desolation.*

On the subject of establishing authority, he thought when it was once settled who was master, the parent and not the child, the business of government was ever after comparatively easy.

On correction he was decided as to the propriety and necessity, as the appointment of God. Yet he thought it need not be frequent, if it were properly administered. He would not have it applied for small faults; for what resulted from childish levity and inconsideration; but only for what was wilful, rebellious or immoral. A child was to be punished, not for being a child, but for being a wicked child. Of course, he thought that chastisement was to be applied coolly, and with deliberation, to fulfil a duty painful to our feelings, not for our gratification.

it was no excuse for a man to allege, that this or that holy temper was not his turn, for every grace ought to be, and must be the turn of every sincere christian." His life was an exhibition of real christian holiness.

As Mr. Scott was so happy as to see all his children who lived to adult age, (three sons and one daughter) hopefully pious, it may not be uninteresting to the reader to know his sentiments on education, and his method of putting them in practice: and though they may be found to differ in some respects from modern theory and practice, they were found in one instance at least, to have been equally successful.

In 1818, on an occasion when most of his children and some of his grandchildren, were collected at his house, at their request, he gave them the outlines of his practice in educating his children, interspersed with directions for the benefit of those present: some of the particulars of which are as follows.

1. One thing upon which he could look back with satisfaction and which he would earnestly inculcate was, that he had ever decidedly *sought first the kingdom of God and his righteousness*, for his children as well as for himself; and this not merely in his prayers, but in his instructions, and in disposing of them in life.

2. He enjoined upon them to teach their children *subjection.* This, he remarked, was as essential to their own welfare, temporal and spiritual, as to that of the family, the church and

the state. The exercise of authority is perfectly consistent with kindness and affection; and it should be so well established that from infancy children should not think of deliberately opposing their parents' will, or of having or doing what he disapproves. This is the greatest safeguard that can be placed about young persons. Subjection to authority is God's ordinance, essential to the belief and practice of religion. If it be true that there are more pious women than men, he would ascribe it very much to this circumstance, that they are more habituated to restraint and subjection. Here, observes his son, "I take the liberty of bearing my testimony to the great value and advantage of the discipline under which we were educated. There was no want of affection, or confidence in my father's family; but there was an awe of parental authority: any thing to which he could not freely consent was *out of the question* with us. This is a preservative from a thousand sins, and follies and miseries, to which those young persons, who have an unsubdued will, are exposed."

3. He enforced, as of great importance the forming of habits of application. The idea of teaching every thing as play or entertainment, could it be realized, would sacrifice the great moral benefits of education. The difference between work and play should be felt; and the proportion of the former to the latter should be gradually increased. The *habit* of application

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In regard to the education of his own children, a resident in his family once observed, "He would have been a wise father if he had not been a religious one; just views were so obvious to his wise mind."

CHAPTER XV.

His publications.

The following List of Mr. Scott's Publications will give a connected view of his unwearied diligence and zeal in the cause of truth.

1779. Force of Truth.
1784. Discourse on Repentance.
Thanksgiving Sermon.
1786. Sermon on Election and Final Perseverance.
1787. Pamphlet on the fatal consequences of Female Prostitution.
Funeral Sermon on Dr. Conyers.
1791. Discourse on the Death of John Thornton Esq.
1792. On Civil Government and the Duties of Subjects.
1793. The Rights of God.
1793. } Essay on the most important subjects in
1794. } Religion, in numbers.

1774, } Notes on Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress,
1795. } in numbers.
1796. Answer to Paine's Age of Reason.
Volume of Sermons.
1797. Warrant and Nature of Faith.
1798. Observations on the Signs and Duties of the Times.
Thanksgiving Sermon.
Fast Sermons.
1801. Sermon before the Church Missionary Society.
1802. Four Sermons.
Sermon at the close of a Course of Lectures.
1803. Funeral Sermon for Rev. J. Newell.
1804. Sermon before the London Missionary Society.
1808. Funeral Sermon for Rev. T. Pentycross.
1810. Sermon on the Death of the Missionary Barneth.
Sermon for the Jews Society.
1811. Address to the Missionaries proceeding to Africa.
1812. Sermon for the London Female Penitentiary.
1811 Remarks on the Bishop of Lincoln's Refutation of Calvinism.
1814. Work on the Question between Jews and Christians.
Sermon on the Peace.
1815. Sermon on the Death of Lady Mary Fitzgerald.

1815 to 1817. Letters on Ecclesiastical Establishments.

1817. History of the Synod of Dort.

——— Sermon on the Death of the Princess Charlotte.

The Collection of his Theological Works, in five volumes octavo, was published in numbers, between the years 1805 and 1808.

He published new and revised editions of several of the above named Works.

The publication of his Commentary was commenced March 1788, finished June 1792. Second edition commenced 1802, completed 1809. Third edition commenced 1807, completed 1811. Fourth edition commenced 1812, completed 1814. The fifth edition, with considerable improvements, was in progress and had reached as far as 2 Tim. iii, at the time of the Author's death, 1821.

CHAPTER XVI.

MEMOIR OF ANNE SCOTT,

ELDEST DAUGHTER OE REV. THOMAS SCOTT, WHO DIED AT WESTON UNDERWOOD, MAY, 1780.

Anne Scott was born in 1785. At the age of three years and a half she had an extraordinary and distressing illness, so that for several weeks there was little hope of her recovery. Her excellent father, aware that she was by nature a *child of wrath, even as others*, and that without regeneration by the gracious operation of the Holy Spirit, she must be eternally lost; and conscious that she had hitherto given no evidence ot such a change having been wrought in her, was greatly distressed about her eternal state; and repeatedly and earnestly besought the Lord that he would not take her away, without affording some evidence of a new heart, and faith in Jesus Christ. Contrary to all expectation she recovered and lived just another year. Half of that year, she gave no unusual attention to religion, but exhibited proofs of a ready understanding, and quick apprehension of whatever was taught her; and indeed, she almost taught herself to read, and was considered as a remarkably forward child.

But when the year was half elapsed, on her father's returning home one evening, her mother informed him that Anne had behaved very

ill, and been so rebellious and obstinate that she had been constrained to correct her. Her father took her upon his lap, and began to talk to her. He told her that she had often heard that she was a sinner against God—that sin was breaking the commandments of God,—that God had commanded her to honour and obey her father and mother—but that she had disobeyed her mother, and thus sinned against God, and made him angry with her; far more angry than her mother had been—that she had often heard that she must have a new heart or disposition—that if her heart or disposition were not wicked she would not thus need a new one, but that her naughty behaviour to her mother (mentioning some other instances) shewed that her heart was wicked—that she therefore needed forgiveness of sins, and a new heart, without which she could not be happy in another world, after death. He continued to converse with her, in language adapted to her age, of the love, and mercy, and grace of Christ, what he had done and suffered for sinners, and his condescension to little children, &c. His paternal heart yearned over his child, and out of the abundance of his heart, his mouth spake. He concluded by giving her directions, and urging upon her the importance of praying to God to forgive her sins, to give her a new heart, and not let her die until he had done it.

From that time till her death, she was constant in the daily exercise of prayer for the forgive-

ness of her sins, for a new heart, for blessings on her father, mother, brothers, and others of the family. She was often overheard in a little room to which she used to retire; and on some occasions her prayers were accompanied with sobs and tears. Once she was guilty of an untruth and her father reasoned and expostulated with her on the wickedness of lying. After which she retired to the little room, where her cries for forgiveness, her prayers for a new and better heart, and that she might not die before her new heart came, were affecting to a very high degree. It was with difficulty she could proceed, her feelings were so agitated. In fact, she exhibited in miniature, the exercises of an adult penitent, and ever after discovered the sincerity of her repentance, by a wonderful correctness of deportment.

She had a very retentive memory, and took much pleasure in committing hymns, particularly Dr. Watts' and the Olney Hymns: would often observe that she had found a beautiful hymn, and then repeat it.

She exhibited the faithfulness of a real christian. A favorite servant in the family would sometimes speak improperly, and then little Anne would remonstrate with her, and say, "Do not use such words Kitty; you will certainly go to hell if you say such naughty words."

She understood much of the plan of salvation. "Papa," she said, "you preached to day concerning the Lamb's blood." He answered,

"What does that mean?" She replied, "the blood of Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God which taketh away the burden of sin out of our hearts."

The day preceding her death, she read to her father a chapter in John, in which the Jews charged Jesus with breaking the Sabbath. On this she paused and said, "Papa, did Jesus Christ ever break the Sabbath day?" He answered, "No, but he did good on the Sabbath, and his enemies called that breaking the Sabbath." "I thought so, she said, Jesus was always good, but we are all naughty till he makes us good: Peter was a good man, but Peter was naughty till Jesus Christ made him good."

She was much delighted with religious conversation, and would stand fixed in silent attention, when pious friends were at the house, and no play or amusement would draw her off: and when the company had retired she would sometimes make enquiries of her parents concerning the subjects of the conversation.

The day previous to her death, as her father was sawing wood in [illegible]
side, prattling [illegible]
large log
and [illegible]
m[illegible]

him and said, "I am very sick, what must I do?" He said, "You must pray for patience." She asked, "What is patience?" but, too ill to wait for an answer, she retired into the next room to the favorite servant above-mentioned, where the most violent symptoms ensued. Her father ordered some medicines, but being engaged, could not see her for two or three hours; he then found she was attacked by scarlet fever, and considered her case as hopeless; every means for her recovery proved unsuccessful, and she expired at ten o'clock next morning, while repeating the Lord's prayer, the concluding words of which were the last she spoke.

We have here an instance of the blessed fruits of parental faithfulness. Wholesome discipline should ever be accompanied with such explanations and instructions as are suited to impress the infant mind, and give correct views of the law of God, the nature of sin, the atonement of Christ, and their own concern in these important truths.

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